

Two Hundred and Fifty Second

ANNUAL REPORT

Of the

Officers and Committees

Of the town of

ASHFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

For the year ending 2017



Cover photo courtesy of Deb Tacy

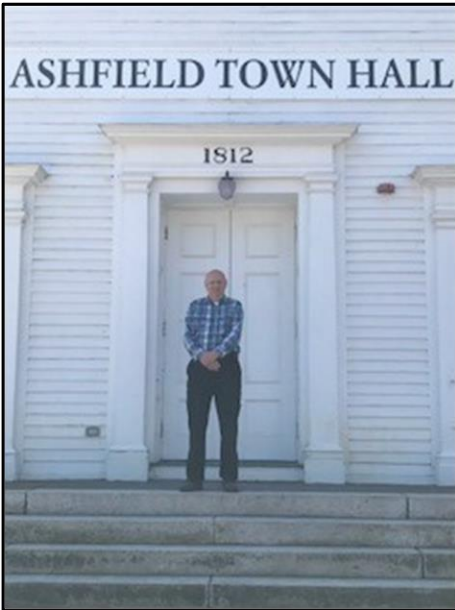
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Dedication

This year we have the privilege of dedicating our annual town report to Douglas Field. Doug has devoted much of his life to Ashfield and its citizens. He joined the Ashfield Fire Department in 1976, and with his retirement this June, he will have devoted 42 years of service to that organization. In his time with the Fire Department, he advanced to Fire Chief and held this position for twenty-two years, from 1987-2009. Doug accomplished significant changes in the midst of public safety advances. Some of these notable highlights include: the addition of two pumper trucks, a free brush truck through the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), introduction of the rescue bottled air system, applied for and received several equipment grants, and the recruitment and retention of fire personnel.



Doug, along with his wife Diane, also directed our volunteer ambulance service from 1983-1989. He successfully led the transition to our current regional service, Highland Ambulance EMS. In 2009, Doug transitioned from Fire Chief to Emergency Management Director, expanding on his public safety role.

Doug also served in other key governmental positions. He was a member of numerous boards and committees, most notably the Select Board, Council on Aging, and as a delegate to the Shelburne Senior Center.

Doug's leadership throughout his service to the Town has been exemplary. We salute Doug and recognize that this level of dedication cannot be accomplished without the support of his wife and three daughters. Doug, thanks for all you have done and the example you have set.

Government Contact Information

GOVERNOR

Charlie Baker

Western Massachusetts Office of the Governor
State Office Building
436 Dwight Street, Suite 300
Springfield, MA 01103
413.784.1200
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STATE SENATOR

Adam G. Hinds, Pittsfield

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100 North Street, Suite 410, Pittsfield, MA 01201
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REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT

Stephen Kulik

District Office
The James Building
16 Main Street, Room 305
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U.S. CONGRESS

Richard Neal

Springfield Office
300 State Street, Suite 200
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U.S. SENATE

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Springfield Office
1550 Main Street, Suite 406
Springfield, MA 01103
413.788.2690

www.warren.senate.gov

Senator Edward J. Markey

Springfield Office
1550 Main Street, 4th Floor
Springfield, MA 01101
413.785.4610

www.markey.senate.gov

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director

12 Olive Street Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.774.3167 – Ext: 103

lindad@frcog.org

Town Officers

2017/2018

Town Office Staff

Appointed One-Year Term

Assessors' Clerk	Jennifer Morse
Assistant Municipal Clerk	Lynn Taylor
Town Administrator	Kayce Warren

Appointed Two-Year Terms – Expires in 2018

Town Clerk	Bridget Rodrigue
Assistant Town Clerk	Lynn Taylor
Town Collector	Lynn Taylor
Town Treasurer	Rebecca Herzog

Elected Officers

One-Year Term

Moderator	Stuart Eisenberg
Tree Warden	Thomas Poissant

Three-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Select Board

Todd Olanyk, Chair	2020
Ronald Coler, Vice Chair	2018
Tom Carter	2019

Board of Assessors

Donna Sarro, Chair	2020
Amy Shapiro	2018
George Stephan	2019

Finance Committee

Ted Murray, Chair	2019
Melinda Gougeon	2019
Carl Satterfield	2020
Carol Lebold	2020
Mary Fitz-Gibbon	2018

Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee

Helen “Poppy” Doyle	2019
Emily Robertson	2018

Board of Health

Duncan Colter, Chair	2020
Carrie O’Gorman	2018
Karen Lavallee	2019

Constables

John LaBelle	2020
Warren Kirkpatrick	2018
Elizabeth Lesure	2019

Park Commission

Judy Haupt, Chair	2019
John Nawrocki	2020
Sally Rice	2018
Kyle Taylor	2017

Sewer Commission

Nancy Hoff, Chair	2018
Tom Miner, Jr.	2020
Daniel Lovett	2019

Five-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Planning Board

Michael Fitzgerald, Chair	2019
Richard Chandler	2022
Jim Cutler	2018
Ken Miller	2019
Alan Rice, Clerk	2020
Megan Bowen, Clerk	

Library Trustees

Marcine Eisenberg, Chair	2022
Caroline Murray	2018
Esther Coler	2019
Renee Rastorfer	2019
Sandra Carter	2020

Appointed Boards & Committees

Terms run July 1 - June 30

One-Year Term

Green Committee

Brian Clark, Chair
 Mary Quigley
 Jen Williams
 Jim Cutler

Information Technology Committee

David Kulp, Chair
 Juliet Jacobson
 Brian Clark
 Andrew Smith
 George Stephan

Town Hall Building Committee

Stuart Harris, Chair
 Doug Cranson
 Nancy Garvin, Secretary
 Mary Quigley
 Donna Scott, Custodian
 Kyle Taylor, Town Hall Steward

Three-Year Terms**Agricultural Commission**

Faye Whitney, Chair	2018
Johanna Anderson-Pratt	2020
Dan Baker	2019
Robyn Crowningshield	2019
Steve Gougeon	2018
Nancy Garvin	2020
Barbara Miller, Clerk	2019

Zoning Board of Appeals

Mollie Babize, Chair	2018
Katharine Nylan	2019
Anne Yuryan	2020
Faye Whitney, Alternate	Appointed Annually
Susan Stark, Alternate	Appointed Annually

Conservation Commission

Lester Garvin, Chair	2019
Janet Clark	2019
Brian Clark	2019
Phil Lussier	2020
Anne Capra	2018

Council on Aging

Doug Field, Chair	2018
Steven Zamojski	2017
Franklin Wickland	2019
Anne Yuryan	2019
Nina Laurie	2019

Historical Commission

Steve Gougeon, Chair	2019
Bill Scaife	2019
Jody Hall	2019
Gerard McGovern	2019
<i>Vacancy</i>	2019

Personnel Board

Priscilla Phelps, Chair	2019
Melinda Gougeon, Finance Committee Member	2019
Thomas Carter, Select Board Member	2019
Jen Markens	2019
Wayne Farrell	2017
Kayce Warren, Town Administrator	

Cultural Council

Jane Willis, Secretary	2019
Carole Groman, Co-Chair	2019
Louise Neidle, Co-Chair	2019
David Kulp	2017
Rochelle Wildfong	2017
Roberta Evans	2018
Stacey Adams	2017
William Feinstein	2018
Rebecca Hartka	2019

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update (*Until completion of charge*)

Alan Rice, Chair
 Mollie Babize
 Anne Capra
 Duncan Colter
 Nancy Garvin
 Judy Haupt
 Barb Miller
 Anne Yuryan

One-Year Term

Registrars of Voter

Muriel Cranson
 Susan Gambino
 Laura Bessette
 Bridget Rodrigue, Alternate

Fire Chief/Forest Fire Warden

Delmar Haskins, Chief

Police Chief

David Gendron (*Term Expired 01.08.2017*)

Beth Bezio (*Appointed Interim Chief 01.09.2017 and Appointed Chief 04.17.2017*)

Police Officers

Daniel Thibault (*Appointed Sergeant 10.2017*)

Fred Bezio

William Bissell (*Appointed – October 2017*)

Gretchen Gerstner

Michael Gralenski (*Appointed -October 2017*)

David Shane Hill (*Leave of absence 2017*)

Jarek Konopko

Conan Pelc

Mark Ruddock (*Resigned – October 2017*)

Gary Sibilia

Christian Viise (*January – June 2017*)

Auxiliary Officers

David Karbon

Phillip Snow (*Resigned October 2017*)

Kyle Walker

Emergency Manager

Doug Field

Assistant Emergency Manager

Paul Monohon

Highway Department

Thomas Poissant, Superintendent
Cody Belval (*Appointed July 2017*)
Jack Clark
Bryan Mollison
Nicholas Nye
Todd Senecal
Alan Taylor (*Resigned June 2017*)

Transfer Station Attendants

Phil Nolan
John LaBelle

Town Hall Custodian

Donna Scott

Animal Control Officer

Warren Kirkpatrick

Inspector of Animals

Martha Pantermehl

Fence Viewer

Alden Gray

Field Drivers

Roland Townsley
David King

FRCOG Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Advisor Committee Community

Richard Chandler

Frederick W. Wells Trustee

Molly Robinson

Carl Nilman Scholarship Committee

Sheila Graves

Other Resources

Health Agent

Claudia Lucas

Carl Nelke

Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program - FCCIP Building Inspector Program

Chris Brothers, Department Clerk

Jim Cerone, Local Inspector

Andy French, Plumbing & Gas Inspector

James Hawkins, Building Commissioner

Paul Lemelin, Zoning & Software Support Assistant

Tom McDonald, Electrical Inspector

Superintendent of Schools

Michael Buoniconti

Veteran Service Office

Brian Brooks - 413.772.1571

Local Veteran Service Agent

Wayne Farrell

Burial Agent

Bridget Rodrigue

Ambulance Service

Mike Rock, Highland Ambulance Director

Ashfield Burial Ground Association

Tom Graves, President

595 Smith Rd. Ashfield, MA 01330

Office hours: Wednesdays 9 AM – 10 AM & 9 PM – 10 PM

Report of the Select Board

Ashfield continues to grapple with key issues that have held our attention for some years. However, progress is being made.

During 2017 state grant funding was finally released to the Town for the Broadband Internet Access Project. The Town contracted with Westfield Gas & Electric for design and construction oversight. As of the end of 2017, this design work was substantially complete. The utility pole attachment applications have been submitted for large sections of the project, and the “make ready” work will begin soon. Thus far we have spent a small amount of the town appropriation. Now that state grant funds have been received, we should be able to avoid town borrowing for most of 2018. While it is still too soon to predict when the project will be completed, there is clearly now light at the end of this very long tunnel. Many thanks go out to the dedicated people of the MPL Advisory Board, the Technology Committee, and Town Staff who have been bird-dogging this project. Many of these townspeople have been at this since WiredWest was formed over a decade ago.

Bridge repair is another ongoing issue. Given our better understand of the condition of many bridges throughout town, the Select Board and Finance Committee established a specific capital fund for bridges with \$100,000 allocated in 2017. Although it is inconceivable that we would be able to fully fund the need, having a significant amount of money set aside will help with repairs and upfront engineering costs to leverage grant funding when available. The Apple Valley Road bridge engineering is nearing completion at a cost of approximately \$90,000. The Town received a grant in the amount of \$500,000 but construction estimates have yet to be finalized. Anticipated construction is in 2019. This is the only bridge that is currently slated for a full replacement. There are a number in need of significant structural repairs slated to begin in 2018.

Town Hall mold remediation work has been completed. Over a two-month period, mold was removed in all the basement spaces of Town Hall. We would like to thank Mary Quigley and other members of the Town Hall Building Committee for the complex installation of a dehumidification HEPA filtration and ventilation system in the affected areas. This system will alleviate any issues going forward and will maintain suitable climate control for the building.

The Town continues to address the invasive weed problem in Ashfield Lake. We have been contracting with environmental service companies for the past three years to survey, hand pull, and vacuum a particularly difficult species from the lake called Fanwort (Cabomba Caroliniana). The difficulty with Fanwort is that fragments of the plant re-root and attach themselves to the bottom of the lake,

continuing to grow. The hand pulling and vacuum method has resulted in limited success. Ongoing surveys have shown the problem to be much larger than originally thought. After a public hearing and meeting with our consultant Angela Panaccione, we began incorporating a winter water draw down procedure on the lake. The draw down is designed to freeze and kill the exposed ground and vegetation, encapsulating it in ice when the water level is at its lowest. Then the vegetation is pulled up as the lake is re-filled and the ice rises. We will continue to monitor the success of this method.

The Town is currently working with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in response to a DEP decree issued in 2015 to maintain the Landfill and permit the Transfer Station. In 2017, Town Meeting approved a debt exclusion up to \$100,000 for improvements at the Transfer Station. Engineering is substantially complete and we hope to begin work in 2018.

Work began on two initiatives. The first was consideration of a marijuana moratorium and the second was a Large Scale Industrial & Commercial Facilities (LSICF) bylaw. Both issues have been the subject of much public debate among our town and regional leaders. We continue to seek direction from the state legislature on the marijuana issue, and are working to craft a bylaw on LSICF. We anticipate that both of these proposals will come before the town for a vote next year.

Ashfield welcomes our new Chief of Police, Beth Bezio. Beth comes to us with nearly three decades of police experience. She was a fulltime Sergeant in the town of Erving for many years, while working part-time as a Corporal in Ashfield. Beth has hit the ground running here, and we feel fortunate to have her on board.

After the departure of Alan Taylor to become the Highway Superintendent in Cummington, Todd Senecal was promoted to the position of Foreman in July. We also hired two new highway crew members Bryan Mollison and Cody Belval. These staff additions will help the highway department fulfill the vital role of maintaining our roadways.

The Select Board would like to take this opportunity to recognize and acknowledge the effort, commitment, and dedication of the many volunteers that strive to make Ashfield the vibrant community it is. Without their knowledge and hard work, the Town could not function.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Olanyk, Tom Carter, and Ron Coler

Annual Town Meeting- May 6, 2017

Pursuant to a Warrant signed by the Select Board on April 26, 2017 and posted on April 26, 2017, Town Moderator Stewart “Buz” Eisenberg announced there is no quorum requirement and called the Annual Town Meeting to order at 10:12 am on Saturday, May 6, 2017 at the Ashfield Town Hall Upper Hall.

Mr. Eisenberg then proceeded to introduce the Town Clerk, Bridget Rodrigue, and asked her to read the Return of Service of the Warrant. After the reading of the Return of Service of the Warrant a motion was made to advance to Article 1.

ARTICLE 1. OPEN THE ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town choose a MODERATOR and a TREE WARDEN, all for a one-year term. A FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER for an unexpired term of one (1) year. A SELECT BOARD MEMBER, A BOARD OF ASSESSORS MEMBER, TWO FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, A BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBER, A CONSTABLE, A PARK COMMISSIONER, A SEWER COMMISSIONER, all for three-year (3) terms: A PLANNING BOARD MEMBER, and a LIBRARY TRUSTEE for five-year (5) terms.

And to vote on the following questions:

Ballot Questions #1

Shall the Town of Ashfield be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition 2 ½, so-called, the amounts required to pay the bonds or notes issued in order to pay for the purchase of a highway pickup truck?

Ballot Question #2

Shall the Town of Ashfield be allowed to exempt from the provisions of Proposition 2 ½, so-called, the amounts required to pay the bonds or notes issued for the costs associated with the Landfill closure and Transfer Station permitting as required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection?

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 1 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

Mr. Eisenberg thanked Town officials and employees who assisted in the preparations for this meeting and introduced those present at the front tables Bridget Rodrigue, Town Clerk; Kayce Warren, Town Administrator; Tom Carter,

Select Board Vice Chair; Todd Olanyk, Select Board Chair; Ron Coler, Select Board; Ted Murray, Finance Committee Chair; Carol Lebold, Finance Committee; Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Finance Committee; Melinda Gougeon, Finance Committee; and Carl Satterfield, Finance Committee.

Mr. Eisenberg then asked all present to stand if able for the traditional reading of the names of the deceased.

ARTICLE 2. REPORTS OF THE TOWN OFFICERS

The following **MOTION** was made by George Stephan and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town vote to act on the reports of the Town Officers.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 2 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 3. STIPENDS AND COMPENSATION FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to set the stipends and compensation for all elected officials of the town (Select Board, Board of Assessors, Board of Health, Moderator, Tree Warden and Constable) as provided by MGL Chapter 41, Section 108, to be made effective as of July 1, 2017, as contained in the budget, and referenced in the handout which has been distributed at this meeting.

Position	Stipend
Moderator	150.00
Board of Assessors Chair	1,500.00
Board of Assessors Members (2 @ \$1250 each)	2,500.00
Board of Health Members (3 @ \$750 each)	2,250.00
Constable (3 elected positions, hours vary)	12.00 per hour
Select Board Chair	1,500.00
Select Board Members (2 @ \$1250 each)	2,500.00
School Committee (2 @ \$500 each)	1,000.00
Tree Warden	300.00

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 3 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 4. *TREASURER'S PERMISSION TO BORROW*

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the revenue of the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2017, in accordance with the provisions of General laws, Chapter 44, Section 4, and to renew any note or notes as may be given for a period of less than one year, in accordance with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 17.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 4 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 5. *ACCEPTANCE OF GRANTS/GIFTS*

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to accept and expend any grants and/or gifts that may become available.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 5 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 6. *SURPLUS EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY DISPOSAL*

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to dispose of any unused town-owned equipment and/or property.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 6 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 7. *EDUCATION EXPENSES*

The following **MOTION** was made by Emily Roberston, Ashfield School Committee Representative and seconded by David Newell:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,826,926 to pay for school committee stipends, regional educational expense, educational capital expenses, and vocational school expenses.

Education	
School Committee Stipends	1,000
MTRSD Regional School Expense	2,236,439
MTRSD Capital Expense	59,587
Vocation Education Expense	529,900
TOTAL	2,826,926

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 7 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

Mr. Eisenberg announced he will be treating Articles 8, 9, & 10 as one since they are all dependent on one another.

ARTICLE 8, 9, & 10. MOHAWK REGIONAL DISTRICT AGREEMENT

The following **MOTION** was made by Poppy Doyle and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to accept the amended Mohawk Trail Regional School District – Regional District Agreement, to be effective July 1, 2017, as referenced in the handout which has been distributed at this meeting (Articles 8 & 9).

That the Town will vote to accept the amended Mohawk Trail Regional School District – Regional District Agreement by striking the following language as contained in Section XI (A)(2), and as referenced in the handout which has been distributed at this meeting (Article 10).

2. The inhabitants of Heath shall lease the Heath School to the District for the sum of \$1.00 annually, for an initial term of twenty years, with an option for an extension of an additional twenty years, and upon such further terms as the parties thereto shall later specify.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Articles 8, 9, & 10 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 11. MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL DISTRICT - ADDITION OF ROWE

The following **MOTION** was made by Emily Robertson and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to accept the addition of The Town of Rowe as a 7-12 member of the District, effective July 1, 2018, as referenced in the handout which has been distributed at this meeting.

A **MOTION** was made by Philip Pless and seconded by Tom Carter to wait for the Town of Rowe to take a vote at their town meeting.

A **VOTE** was taken on the motion to table, and the motion did not pass, and was so declared by the Moderator.

After some additional discussion, Michael Fitzgerald made a **MOTION** to call the question.

Motion to call question failed.

Vote: YES 75 NO 39 ABSTAIN 3

A **MOTION** was made to table Article 11 by Caroline Murray and seconded by Philip Pless.

A **VOTE** was taken on this motion, and failed by voice vote. **MOTION** from floor to do a hand count.

Motion to table Article 11 failed to meet the 2/3 requirement.

Vote: YES 53 NO 51 ABSTAIN 6

MOTION to call the question passed by voice vote.

MOTION from floor to do a hand count.

VOTE: YES 77 NO 30 ABSTAIN 6

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 11 **PASSED** by a simple majority, and so declared the Moderator.

Mr. Eisenberg requests that Town Meeting consolidate Articles 12, 13, & 14 into one vote to table. These Articles were approved last year as part of the initial Rowe vote.

ARTICLE 12, 13, & 14. MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL DISTRICT AGREEMENT AMENDMENTS

The following **MOTION** was made to table Articles 12, 13, & 14 by George Stephan and seconded by Tom Carter.

A **VOTE** was taken, and the motion to table Articles 12, 13, & 14 **PASSED** unanimously, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 15. PURCHASE OF A HIGHWAY TRUCK

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to transfer from free cash a sum not to exceed \$43,500 to be expended by the Select Board for the purchase of a highway truck.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 15 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 16. LANDFILL CLOSURE AND TRANSFER STATION

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum not to exceed \$100,000 for the costs associated with the Landfill closure and Transfer Station permitting as required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, provided however, that no amounts shall be borrowed or expended hereunder unless and until the Town votes at an election to exempt from the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 21C, Proposition 2 ½ so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds or notes.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 16 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 17. GENERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$408,878 to pay for general government expenses.

General Government	
Elected Moderator	150
Select Board Salaries	4,000
Special Project Staffing	1,000
SB Administrative Support	7,206
Select Board Expense	2,650
Town Administrator Salary	62,424
Town Administrator Expense	2,650
Auditor	7,000

Assessors' Salaries	4,000
Assessors' Clerk Salary	17,804
Assessors' Expense	23,545
Treasurer Salary	20,664
Treasurer Expense	9,165
Collector Salary	18,681
Collector Expense	11,378
Legal Expense	6,000
Information Technology	15,100
Contracted Services	27,742
Personnel Board Expense	250
Energy Manager	3,506
Town Clerk Salary	32,378
Assistant Municipal Clerk Salary	22,602
Town Clerk Expense	7,450
Elections Expense	2,000
Registrars of Voters Expense	600
Street Lists	900
Conservation Commission Expense	1,450
Planning Board	1,020
Zoning Board of Appeals Expense	850
Town Office Expense	5,700
TH Maintenance	22,278
TH Steward	700
TH Building Committee Expense	10,000
General Insurance	57,541

Bonds	1,200
Town Reports	800
TOTAL	408,878

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 17 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 18. RESERVE ACCOUNT

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$3,000 to pay for the Reserve Account to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures under M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 6 for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2017, or act relative thereto.

MOTION to remove “or act relative thereto”: Ron Coler Second:
Todd Olanyk

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 18 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 19. PUBLIC SAFETY EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$203,024 and transfer \$4,870 from the Dog License and Control Fund for a total of \$207,894 to pay for Public Safety Expenses.

Public Safety	
Police Chief Salary	58,827
Police Department Wages	39,780
Police Department Expense	20,735
Drug & Alcohol Testing	300
Fire Chief Stipend	7,650
Fire Department Wages	19,500
Fire Department Expense	42,850
Emergency Management Stipends	1,025

Emergency Management Expense	3,457
Animal Control Officer Stipend	2,800
Animal Control Expense	2,070
Animal Inspector Stipend	400
Animal Inspector Expense	200
Tree Warden Stipend	300
Tree Warden Expense	8,000
TOTAL	207,894

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 19 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 20. PUBLIC WORK EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$600,001 to pay for Public Works Expenses.

Public Works	
Highway Superintendent Salary	59,012
Highway Labor	172,480
General Highway Expense	100,000
Highway Department Fuel	50,000
Winter Roads Expense (Snow/Ice)	110,500
Winter Sidewalk Expense	5,000
Street Lights	3,200
HRMC Expense	7,694
Transfer Station Expense	92,115
TOTAL	600,001

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 20 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 21. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$53,393 to pay for Health and Human Services Expenses.

Health & Human Services	
Board of Health Stipends	2,250
Board of Health Expense	1,250
Health Agent	8,000
Senior Center Expense	30,538
Local Council on Aging Expense	850
Veterans Services District	3,385
Veterans Benefits - Local	6,120
Veterans Graves	1,000
TOTAL	53,393

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 21 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 22. CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$77,972 to pay for Cultural and Recreational Expenses.

Culture & Recreation	
Belding Memorial Library Expense	47,750
Belding Memorial Park Expense	12,722
Open Space & Recreation Plan Expense	2,000
Ashfield Lake Dam Inspection	2,000

Invasive Species Removal	9,000
Lake Dam Maintenance	1,000
Retention Wall Repair	3,000
Historical Commission Expense	500
TOTAL	77,972

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 22 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 23. DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$169,594 to pay for debt service expenses.

Debt	
Highway Truck Debt	52,850
Highway Garage Debt	75,044
Backhoe Debt	34,200
Short-term Debt Interest	7,500
TOTAL	169,594

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 23 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 24. INTERGOVERNMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will raise and appropriate \$54,410 to pay intergovernmental assessments for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Expenses.

Intergovernmental Assessments	
Core Assessment	15,160
Accountant Service	22,868

Software Maintenance	750
Procurement Services	2,798
Radio Maintenance	5,184
Inspections Program	7,500
REPC Assessment	150
TOTAL	54,410

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 24 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 25. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT EXPENSES

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$176,578 to pay for employee benefit expenses.

Benefits	
Franklin Regional Retirement System	83,596
Workers Compensation	11,000
Unemployment Insurance	3,000
Health Insurance	59,182
Retiree Health Insurance	8,800
Medicare/FICA	11,000
TOTAL	176,578

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 25 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 26. AMBULANCE SERVICES

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to transfer from free cash \$89,957 to pay for ambulance services.

Ambulance Services	
Highland Ambulance Assessment	76,781
Highland Ambulance Radio Assessment	2,592
Ambulance Building Capital	10,584
TOTAL	89,957

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 26 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 27. CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to transfer \$5,000 from the Fred Cross Fund and \$65,925 from free cash for a total of \$70,925 to pay for the following capital expenditures.

Capital Expenditures	
Town Re-wiring Project	5,000
Highway - Bridge Related Work	50,000
Parks Commission Equipment	3,425
Belding Memorial Library Restoration	12,500
TOTAL	70,925

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 27 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 28. BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by David Kulp:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$20,000 and transfer \$80,000 from free cash for a total of \$100,000 to pay for capital expenses associated with Broadband development.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 28 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 29. TOWN HALL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 and transfer \$60,000 from the Town Hall Steeple Account and create a new account called Town Hall Repairs & Maintenance to fund steeple repairs and other Town Hall repairs and maintenance.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 29 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 30. SENIOR CENTER CAPITAL FUND ACCOUNT

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Doug Field:

That the Town will vote to transfer \$15,000 from free cash to be placed in a dedicated Senior Center Capital Fund Account for the purpose of covering costs incurred in the research and exploration of possible sites, the renovation of an existing building, new construction of a suitable Senior Center, and any other related costs.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 30 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 31. OPEB FUND

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Ted Murray:

That the Town will vote to accept the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 32B, Section 20, as amended by Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016, and establish a separate fund known as the "Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund" or OPEB, for the purpose of funding future financial obligations of the Town for health insurance and other post-employment benefits of retirees.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 31 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 32. OPEB ACCOUNT FUNDING

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and seconded by Ted Murray:

That the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$2,000 and transfer the remainder of the appropriated funds in the OPEB Account to fund the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund Account and authorize the Treasurer to create or join a trust fund.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 32 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 33. SEWER ENTERPRISE FUNDS

The following **MOTION** was made by Nancy Hoff and seconded by Carl Satterfield:

That the Town will vote to appropriate \$155,219 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund for sewer expenses and to meet that appropriation by raising \$155,219 in the following manner.

Revenues	
Fixed Costs	89,569.00
Volume Based Costs	65,650.00
TOTAL	155,219.00
Expenses	
Salaries & Benefits	84,069.00
Fixed Operating Costs	500.00
Volume Based Costs	65,650.00
Emergency Fund	5,000.00
TOTAL	155,219.00

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 33 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 34. BYLAW AMENDMENT – REVOLVING FUNDS

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and seconded by Todd Olanyk:

That the Town will vote to amend the general by-laws of the Town of Ashfield by adding a new section to establish and authorize revolving funds for use by certain town departments, boards, committees, agencies, or officers under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53E ½:

DEPARTMENTAL REVOLVING FUNDS

1. Purpose: This by-law establishes and authorizes revolving funds for use by town departments, boards, committees, agencies, or officers in connection with the operation of programs or activities that generate fees, charges or other receipts to support all or some of the expenses of those programs or activities. These revolving funds are established under and governed by General Laws Chapter 44 § 53E1/2;
2. Expenditure Limitations An authorized department or agency head, board, committee or officer may incur liabilities against and spend monies from a revolving fund established and authorized by this by-law without appropriation subject to the following limitations:
 - A. Fringe benefits of full-time employees whose salaries or wages are paid from the fund shall also be paid from the fund (except for those employed as school bus drivers),
 - B. No liability shall be incurred in excess of the available balance of the fund, and
 - C. The total amount spent during a fiscal year shall not exceed the amount authorized by this by-law, or town meeting on or before July 1 of that fiscal year, or any increased amount of that authorization that is later approved during that fiscal year by the Select Board and Finance Committee;
3. Interest Interest earned on monies credited to a revolving fund established by this by-law shall be credited to the general fund;
4. Procedures and reports Except as provided in General Laws Chapter 44 §53E½ and this by-law, the laws, by-laws, rules, regulations, policies or procedures that govern the receipt and custody of town monies and the expenditure and payment of town funds shall apply to the use of a revolving fund established and authorized by this by-law. The town accountant shall include a statement on the collections credited to each fund, the encumbrances and expenditures charged to the fund and the balance available for expenditure in the regular report the town accountant provides the

department, board, committee, agency or officer on appropriations made for its use;

5. Authorized Revolving Funds. The Table establishes:
 - A. Each revolving fund authorized for use by a town department, board, committee, agency or officer,
 - B. The department or agency head, board, committee or officer authorized to spend from each fund,
 - C. The fees, charges and other monies charged and received by the department, board, committee, agency or officer in connection with the program or activity for which the fund is established that shall be credited to each fund by the Town Accountant,
 - D. The expenses of the program or activity for which each fund may be used,
 - E. Any restrictions or conditions on expenditures from each fund,
 - F. Any reporting or other requirements that apply to each fund; and
 - G. The fiscal years each fund shall operate under this by-law.

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend	Revenue Source	Use of funds	FY2018 Spending Limit
Dog License and Control	Town Clerk	Licenses, fines, and donations	Supplies, animal care, bylaw permitted expenses	\$5,000
Park	Park Commission	Program fees, donations	Park Expenses	\$1,500
Library	Library Board of Trustees	Fees, rental	Library Expenses	\$2,500

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 34 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 35. ZONING BYLAW PROPOSAL – SENIOR HOUSING

The following **MOTION** was made by Michael Fitzgerald, Planning Board Chair, and seconded by Tom Carter:

That the Town will vote to add the following section to the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws:

Town of Ashfield Bylaw Proposal

VI.H. Senior Citizens Housing

1. General

- a. The purpose of this section is to allow development of Senior Citizens Housing within the Town of Ashfield.
- b. Under this section the Planning Board may grant special permits for Senior Citizens Housing.
- c. All criteria listed in this section and in Section VII Special Permits in the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws shall apply to Senior Citizens Housing.

2. Planning

- d. Only people fifty-five (55) years and older may reside in a Senior Citizens Housing development.
- e. The cumulative total number of Senior Citizens Housing units approved under this section shall at no time constitute more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the total number of dwellings within the Town of Ashfield. The cumulative total number of Senior Citizens Housing units approved under this section shall at no time constitute more than ten percent (10%) of the total number of dwellings within the sewer district of the Town of Ashfield.
- f. To the maximum extent possible developments shall provide for pedestrian access to amenities within three hundred (300) feet of the property. Snow removal of pedestrian walkways shall not be required under this section unless needed for emergency access.
- g. The Planning Board may allow mixed use development under this section by combined Special Permit, upon finding that said uses are not in conflict with the purpose of the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws and of this section. Such uses shall be no more than thirty-three percent (33%) of the total finished

space and shall be included in all dimensional calculations. Uses that share a lot with senior housing shall be allowed only insofar as they would be allowed within that lot or structure without the presence of Senior Citizens Housing. Furthermore, all such uses shall be included in any parking or density calculations for the total lot.

3. Dimensional Requirements

- h. Each individual development shall be located on a single lot. No individual development shall exceed a density of six (6) housing units per lot. Bedrooms shall be limited to a maximum of ten (10) per lot. Legal non-conforming lots of less than two

(2) acres shall be allowed one unit per one-quarter (1/4) acre. The Planning Board may further limit the size of any individual development according to considerations of topography, neighborhood character, and the other criteria governing the issuance of special permits.

- i. Each housing unit shall be either one (1) or two (2) bedrooms. One-bedroom units shall not exceed one thousand (1,000) square feet in floor area. Two-bedroom units shall not exceed twelve hundred (1,200) square feet in floor area. Total finished space

as defined by the current building code on the lot shall not exceed five thousand (5,000) square feet. Pre-existing structures in excess of five thousand (5,000) square feet of finished space shall be exempt from this limit. This limit shall include any other

finished space on the lot including commercial or common space.

- j. For new structures and additions, the height shall not exceed thirty-five (35) feet above average grade.

- k. Legal nonconforming lots or structures may be used for Senior Citizens Housing under this section. Renovation of existing nonconforming structures under this section shall not increase the dimensional nonconformity of the existing lot or structure.

- l. Thirty percent (30%) of the lot shall remain as open space exclusive of buildings, driveways and parking.

- m. Each development shall be required to insure adequate driveway access for emergency vehicles onto the lot and to the building(s). The Planning Board may require that any development containing more than five (5) units be served by at least two (2) means of vehicular access. The Planning Board may also require pick-up and drop-off space in the driveway.

- n. The developer shall provide a minimum of one and one-half (1.5) on-site parking spaces for each unit.
- o. New structures and additions within the Ashfield Plain Historic District shall have a minimum of fifteen (15) feet of front setback and a maximum of thirty (30) feet. Rear and side setback requirements within the Ashfield Plain Historic District may be reduced from the general setback requirements upon a finding that the purposes of the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws are better served with the reduction than without it. This reduction shall not allow new buildings to be placed within twenty-five (25) feet of buildings on adjacent lots.

4. Administration

- p. Housing units constructed or converted under this section shall be either condominiums or apartments. Condominiums shall require a Condominium Association to oversee maintenance, enforcement of the requirements of this section, and any conditions of the special permit. Apartment developments shall require a Tenants Association to oversee maintenance, enforcement of the requirements of this section, and any conditions of the special permit. The majority of either association shall be residents of the development. The form and rules of these associations shall be approved by the Planning Board. These requirements shall be recorded as part of the permanent deed to the property or properties.
- q. Each year the Association shall file a list of residents including name and date of birth with the Ashfield Town Clerk. The Town Clerk shall certify that all residents are over (fifty-five) 55 years of age. The list of names will be copied to the Fire and Police Departments, as well as the Planning Board and the Building Commissioner. If any residents are under fifty-five (55) years of age the Planning Board and the Building Commissioner will be notified.
- r. Should the owner or owners of the property wish to change the use of the property to non-Senior Citizens Housing use, they must adjust the number of dwelling units to conform to the density allowed by the current Ashfield Zoning Bylaws at the time of the application for change of use. This shall include removing the entire kitchen from each unit to be eliminated.

Add to Section IV: Dimensional Requirements

IV.F. Dimensional Requirements for Senior Citizens Housing

- 1. Frontage requirements may be waived or modified for Senior Citizens

Housing under special permit from the Planning Board for Senior Citizens Housing.

2. Density may be increased for Senior Citizens Housing by special permit from the Planning Board for Senior Citizens Housing.

A **MOTION** was made by Susan Stark to **AMEND** section 4a by removing the last line – “These requirements shall be recorded as part of the permanent deed to the property or properties,” and seconded by Anne Yuryan.

A **VOTE** was taken on the motion to amend, and **FAILED** by a near unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

A **MOTION** was made to **CALL** the question by Ken Kipen and seconded by Marcine Eisenberg **PASSED** by a near unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

A **VOTE** was taken on this article as it stands in the warrant, and Article 35 **PASSED** by a near unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 36. CLIMATE CHANGE RESOLUTION

The following **MOTION** was made by Richard Pree and seconded by Bruce Bennett:

A Resolution Relating to the Growing Risks of Climate Change

To ask the Town of Ashfield to adopt the following non-binding Resolution, or take other action relative thereto:

WHEREAS, climate change poses a serious threat to the Town of Ashfield in terms of the economy, public health, and the environment;

AND WHEREAS, as a result of climate change, the Northeast is experiencing warming temperatures and a large increase in the amount of rainfall measured during heavy precipitation events;

AND WHEREAS, more frequent heat waves in the Northeast are expected to increasingly threaten human health through more heat stress, droughts, and air pollution;

AND WHEREAS, sea level rise and more frequent heavy rains are expected to increase flooding and storm surge, threatening people and infrastructure, necessitating increased costs for damage control;

AND WHEREAS, as temperatures rise, agriculture will likely face reduced yields, potentially damaging livelihoods and the regional economy;

AND WHEREAS, Carbon Fee and Dividend will significantly reduce carbon emissions, create jobs, grow the economy, save lives, and protect households from higher energy prices;

AND WHEREAS, most economists, from conservative to liberal, agree that the most cost-effective way to cut carbon pollution is to add a fee that steadily raises the price of fossil fuels;

AND WHEREAS, legislation addressing climate change should not economically burden Ashfield and its citizens;

AND WHEREAS, Carbon Fee and Dividend will protect lower and middle-income households, as two thirds of families will break even or receive more in dividends than they would pay for in higher living expenses;

AND WHEREAS, Carbon Fee and Dividend will create jobs, as the dividend puts money back into local economies;

AND WHEREAS, Carbon Fee and Dividend is a market-based solution in which a fee is levied on carbon-based fuels as they come out of the ground or as they are imported, with all monies returned in equal shares to households as a dividend, thus leveraging market forces that encourage investments in increased energy efficiency and alternate sources of energy by both industry and consumers;

AND WHEREAS, Carbon fee and Dividend will employ a "border adjustment" to protect domestic businesses. The "border adjustment" will use import/export fees and rebates to neutralize any impact to the cost of domestically produced products, and incentivize other states to adopt a comparable carbon fee;

AND WHEREAS, in the absence of federal Carbon Fee and Dividend, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can pass state Carbon Fee and Dividend (or "Rebate")

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN OF ASHFIELD calls upon the Massachusetts Legislature and the United States Congress to implement Carbon Fee and Dividend (or "Rebate"), placing a steadily rising fee on carbon- based fuels, and returning all fees collected, minus administrative costs, to households.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT UPON PASSAGE the Ashfield Town Clerk shall mail copies of the resolution and vote to the President of the United States, Donald Trump; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Paul Ryan; the House

Minority leader, Nancy Pelosi; the Majority and Minority leaders of the U.S. Senate, Mitch McConnell and Charles Schumer; the U.S. Senators representing Massachusetts, Edward Markey and Elizabeth Warren; the Congressperson representing our district, Richard Neal; the Governor of Massachusetts, Charlie Baker; the Massachusetts Senate President, Stan Rosenberg; the Speaker of the Massachusetts House, Robert DeLeo; and the state representative and state senator from our district, Steven Kulik and Adam Hinds.

A **MOTION** to **CALL** the question by Joanne Ostrowski and seconded by Poppy Doyle.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 36 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 37. BYLAW AMENDMENT – QUALIFIED VOTERS

The following **MOTION** was made by Aaron Nelson and seconded by Eric Nelson:

To see if the Town of Ashfield will petition the Massachusetts General Court for permission to amend the Qualified Voters section of the town bylaws, replacing the current bylaw with the following:

Any citizen sixteen years of age or older, so long as they are a resident of Ashfield at the time they register to vote and are otherwise eligible under all provisions beside age set forth for voters in M.G.L. Chapter 51, Section 1, is a qualified voter of the town and is entitled to vote in all Town elections, participate and vote in all Town Meetings, participate in Town Caucus and sign all nominating, warrant and other petitions authorized by Town bylaws. Persons wishing to serve in elected positions must be registered voters of at least 18 years of age.

A **MOTION** to **AMEND** petition by Mary Wickwire and seconded by Doug Cranson to read as follows:

Any citizen sixteen years of age or older, and who have been on the tax roll or paying taxes for a minimum of three years, and are otherwise eligible under all provisions beside age set forth for voters in M.G.L. Chapter 51, Section 1, is a qualified voter of the town and is entitled to vote in all Town elections, participate and vote in all Town Meetings, participate in Town Caucus and sign all nominating, warrant and other petitions authorized by Town bylaws. Persons wishing to serve in elected positions must be registered voters of at least 18 years of age.

A **VOTE** was taken on this amendment and **FAILED** by a near unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

A **MOTION** to **CALL** the Question by Todd Olanyk and seconded by Marcine Eisenberg passed by a unanimous vote, so declared the Moderator.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 37 **PASSED** by a near unanimous vote, and was so declared by the Moderator.

At 3:56 pm, upon a **MOTION** made by Marcine Eisenberg and duly seconded by Ron Coler, the Annual Town Meeting was adjourned and dissolved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bridget S. Rodrigue".

Bridget S. Rodrigue

Town Clerk

ATTENDANCE: 144 registered voters

Special Town Meeting – April 18, 2017

Pursuant to a Warrant signed by the Select Board on March 20, 2017 and posted on March 22, 2017, Town Moderator Stewart “Buz” Eisenberg called the Special Town Meeting to order at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at the Ashfield Town Hall.

At 6:36 pm after the reading of the Service of the Warrant by the Town Clerk, the meeting took up the first order of business.

ARTICLE 1. ASSESSOR’S EXPENSE ACCOUNT

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer from the Assessor’s Overlay Account the sum of \$2,300 to the Assessor’s Expense Account.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 1 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 2. RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE EXPENSE

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to authorize the transfer of \$1,000 from Health Insurance Expense to the Retiree Health Insurance Expense.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 2 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 3: TREE WARDEN EXPENSE

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$3,476.04 from Pipeline Opposition Mitigation Account and \$1,523.96 from Compensation Study Account for a total of \$5,000 to Tree Warden Expense Account.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 3 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 4: *TREASURER SALARY ACCOUNT*

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$2,858.67 from Sweeper Mower Account and \$841.33 from Assistant Municipal Clerk Salary Account for a total of \$3,700 to Treasurer Salary Account.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 4 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 5: *TREASURER EXPENSE*

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$450 from Assistant Municipal Clerk Salary Account to Treasurer Expense Account.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 5 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 6: *TOWN CLERK EXPENSE*

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$1,250 from Elections Expense Account to Town Clerk Expense Account.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 6 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 7: *PROJECT STAFFING*

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$700 from Elections Expense Account to Special Project Staffing Account.

A **VOTE** was taken, and Article 7 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 8: WINTER ROADS - SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL

The following **MOTION** was made by Ron Coler and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$25,220 from Vocational Education Account to Winter Roads for snow and ice removal activities.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 8 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 9: POLICE CRUISER

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$21,000 from Vocational Education Account to Police Cruiser Account.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 9 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 10: UNEMPLOYMENT EXPENSE

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and duly seconded:

That the Town vote to transfer \$11,500 to pay for prior years' cumulative unemployment assessments from Vocational Education Account into Unemployment Expense Account.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 10 **PASSED** by a unanimous vote, so declared by the Moderator.

At 7:14 pm, upon a **MOTION** duly made and seconded, the Special Town Meeting was adjourned and dissolved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget S. Rodrigue
Town Clerk

ATTENDANCE: 34 registered voters

Special Town Meeting December 11, 2017

Pursuant to a Warrant signed by the Select Board on November 22, 2017 and posted on November 27, 2017, Town Moderator Stewart “Buz” Eisenberg called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:00 pm on Monday, December 11, 2017 at the Ashfield Town Hall.

At 7:03 pm after the reading of the Service of the Warrant, the meeting took up the first order of business.

ARTICLE 1. HIGHWAY BRIDGE EXPENSE

The following **MOTION** was made by Todd Olanyk and duly seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 for Highway Bridge renovations and related expenses.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 1 **PASSED** by a near unanimous vote.

Vote: YES 38 NO 0 ABSTAIN 1

ARTICLE 2. BROADBAND CAPITAL EXPENSE

The following **MOTION** was made by Tom Carter and duly seconded by Ron Coler:

That the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$40,000 for Broadband Capital Expense.

After some discussion, a **VOTE** was taken, and Article 2 **PASSED** by a near unanimous vote.

Vote: YES 38 NO 0 ABSTAIN 1

At 7:43 pm, upon a **MOTION** duly made and seconded, the Special Town Meeting was adjourned and dissolved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget S. Rodrigue
Town Clerk

ATTENDANCE: 39 registered voters

Agricultural Commission Annual Report

Members of the Agricultural Commission:

Barbara Miller, Chair	Nancy Garvin
Faye Whitney	Johanna Pratt
Robyn Crowningshield, Scribe	Steve Gougeon
Dan Baker	

The Ashfield Agricultural Commission does not receive any funds from the town through the budget process. There is a small amount of money from a grant that is available for approved expenses of the Commission.

In 2017, the Agriculture Commission was involved in the development of the Ashfield Open Space and Recreation Plan, providing input for content, as well as updating the mapping of chapter and protected lands. The result is a very comprehensive, parcel-by-parcel evaluation of land in Ashfield.

The commission also updated the Grievance Protocol identified in the Right to Farm Bylaw and presented it to the Select Board for approval.

Animal Control

In 2017, I was presented with three events unlike any I had ever seen in my 36 years as Ashfield's Animal Control Officer. The first of these events occurred in early June and involved a rogue woodchuck that showed up on Main Street and decided to chase several people. This woodchuck would then vanish, only to return later and resume its bizarre behavior. I finally met up with this sick woodchuck on one of my trips down Main Street and removed it from the area.

The second event occurred in mid-July and involved a racoon with a clear plastic bottle stuck on its head. After eleven calls over a three-day period, and with the help of some residents, I was able to capture the animal and remove the empty mayonnaise bottle from its head. The raccoon ran off very happy, and most likely, very hungry.

The last event occurred in December and involved a Canadian goose frozen in some thin ice on Ashfield Lake. The weather was bitter cold and windy, and rescue teams from Cumington, Plainfield, and Ashfield were called to the goose's aid. They were able to free the goose from the ice, and the following day an Ashfield resident was able to capture the goose and Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife took it in for rehabilitation.

For the general information of the town's residents, Massachusetts and the Federal government require a large amount of continuing education and training regarding the care and handling of animal issues. This training covers both domestic and wild animals. I have attended all required continuing education and this enable me to better serve Ashfield's residents and animals.

As a reminder, all dogs six months and older must be licensed by April 1st of each year. In order to obtain a dog license, an up-to-date rabies certificate must be on file with the town clerk. Licenses can be done in person, by mail, deposited in the drop box in front of the town hall, or online. Payment can be made in the form of cash, check, or credit card. Cats six months and older are also required by state law to have an up-to-date rabies shot. In addition, Ashfield has a year-round restraining order and all dog owners are fully responsible for damages done by an unrestrained dog.



Thank you to all the people and organizations that have supported and assisted me in performing my duties as the Ashfield Animal Control Officer. I am always available to answer any questions or concerns regarding domestic and wild

animals and can be reached at 413-628-3811. If any animal is missing, all lost and found notices are posted at Neighbors Store, Ashfield Hardware, and the ASHfield Post Office.

Dogs Confined	1	Dogs Placed	1
Cats Confined	0	Cats Placed	0
Other Animals Confined	0	Animal Bites	3
Phone Calls	1891	Mileage	1159
Labor Hours	1042	Fines Collected	0
Expenses	\$995.37		

Respectively submitted,

Warren Kirkpatrick, Animal Control Officer

Picture courtesy of Warren Kirkpatrick

Board of Assessors

The Town of Ashfield had a single tax rate for Fiscal Year 2017 of \$16.22 per \$1,000 of real estate and personal property value. The average single-family tax bill in Ashfield for FY2017 was \$4,091.00.

The tax rate is set based on voter approval of the budget at Annual Town Meeting. The town is allowed to increase annually by 2 ½ % plus an allowance for new growth construction. Amounts over the levy limit for debt exclusions or overrides are approved by a vote of town voters. Assessors are responsible for assessing property taxes, the major source of revenue for most communities, as well as miscellaneous excise taxes, such as the motor vehicle.

Under law, all property in Ashfield is assessed at its full and fair market value each year for taxation. This is accomplished through the maintenance and administration of all property data records working closely with Patriot Properties. The Board administers motor vehicle, real estate and personal property taxes. The Board also handles all motor vehicle excise, real estate, and personal property abatements and all statutory tax exemptions per law.

In 2017 Donna Sarro ran for a second term on the Board of Assessors. All three board members are certified according to state requirements. George Stephan participated in the MAAO Annual School at UMASS in August and passed Course 200.

Total assessed values for each major class of properties and their share of the tax levy.

Class	Valuation	% of Levy
Residential	\$215,351,408	89.5872
Commercial	\$8,485,030	3.5298
Industrial	\$982,006	0.4085
Personal Property	\$15,563,586	6.4745
	\$240,382,030	100.00

The total exempt value was \$18,352,603

Summary of Monies Raised by Taxation and Receipts:

	FY'15	FY'16	FY'17
Total Amount to be Raised	\$4,591,778.34	\$4,790,087.32	\$4,902,887.29
Annual Tax Levy	\$3,577,849.66	\$3,700,884.29	\$3,898,996.53
Total Property Value	\$224,035,671	\$225,114,616	\$240,382,030
Tax Rate Per \$1000	\$15.97	\$16.44	\$16.22

It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that their property card is correct. You can view a synopsis of your property at www.axisgis.com/AshfieldMA/. If you have questions about your assessed value or if you want a copy of your full property card to review please contact Jenn Morse, Assessors Administrator or email assessors@ashfield.org

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sarro (term expires 2020)
Amy Shapiro (term expires 2018)
George Stephan (term expires 2019)

Belding Memorial Library Trustees

In many places throughout Massachusetts, the town library, unlike its neighboring wooden structures, is often made of stone or brick, an enduring testament to the generosity of its benefactor. The Belding Library is such an edifice, but inside the granite walls and tall columns is a vibrant beating heart.

Every year the library grows in its importance and value to the town, as the following figures show:

Year	Circulation	Patron Registration	Meeting Room Use
2013	16,828	953	95
2014	20,605	998	138
2015	24,963	1099	170
2016	29,385	1161	182
2017	30,872	1247	194

There are regular classes for adults and children, poetry readings, book signings by local authors, tutoring sessions, and regular meetings of various organizations in town – all of which contribute to the warm lively atmosphere of our library.



This year marks the end of our three-year Capital Campaign. Although we did not come close to reaching our goal of \$350,000, we have made significant gains. In 2017 the front steps were rebuilt, and the second phase of the chimney pointing was completed. The roof over the

addition was not replaced, but with the library becoming the hub for Broadband, a new roof is our top priority for 2018. With grants from the Green Communities and the Broadband Initiative, we will soon have a new HVAC and much needed upgrades to our electrical system. We could never have achieved as much as we have without the invaluable assistance of Mary Quigley, Stuart Harris, and Chris Farley. Every citizen should know that their Select Board, Finance Committee, and Town Administrator have shown a remarkable understanding of the mission, and the needs of our library. Thanks to them and the voters of Ashfield for your continued support.

To Library Director Martha Cohen, staff members Irene Branson and Sherry Scott, and the selfless volunteers who make the library function so well, our most heartfelt thanks. To Nina Coler and the others who make the Annual Book Sale so successful, and to the Friends of the Belding who support our mission, we again express our gratitude.

And special thanks to my fellow trustees, who bring their energy, dedication and enthusiasm to the job. Your efforts are keeping the heart of the Belding beating.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcine Eisenberg, Chair

Picture courtesy of Joe Osterman

Board of Health

	2017	2016	2015	2014
Title 5	15	13	13	10
Perk Test	16	8	7	3
Construction	6	4	7	4
Well	5	3	0	0
Fees Collected	\$4,790.00	\$3,360.00	\$4,160.00	\$3,175.00

2017 was another moderate year for construction with sixteen perk tests, six septic system construction permits, fifteen title five permits, and five well permits. A total of \$4,790 was collected in fees for the year.

Despite a few glitches, Carrie O’Gorman pulled together another successful flu clinic. Thank you to all the volunteers.

Thank you fellow Board of Health members, Carrie O’Gorman and Karen Lavallee, and Health Agents, Carl Nelke and Claudia Lucas.

Respectfully submitted,

Duncan Colter, Chair

**Ashfield Burial Ground Association
Burials in Ashfield Cemeteries**

January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017

Name	Date of Death	Date of Burial	Cemetery
Linea (Larson) Gabriel	04/20/2017	04/22/2017	Beldingville
Robert J. Morrison	05/10/2016	05/10/2017	Plain
Jean (Vachon) Keyes	05/12/2017	05/16/2017	Plain
Leslie C. Ladd	06/22/2017	06/27/2017	Plain
Mary (Schmidt) Zingler	07/05/2017	07/10/2017	South Ashfield
Mary (Curtiss) Hall	07/27/2017	08/16/2017	Hill
Ian Fletcher-Lynch	06/25/2016	09/24/2017	Baptist Corner
Christopher J. Cranston	03/12/2017	10/28/2017	Plain
Joan (Witkop) Lanoue	11/20/2017	11/28/2017	Spruce Corner
Allyn M. Scarborough	11/10/2017	12/02/2017	Plain

Conservation Commission

Conservation Commissions in Massachusetts have regulatory responsibility stemming from legislative passage of three acts; Wetlands Protection Act, Riverfront Act and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Act. We review applications for activities within resource areas, conduct site visits, advertise and hold hearings, make determinations and issue permits which allow these activities with certain conditions attached. We also have the responsibility to review Forest Cutting Plans prepared under the Forest Cutting Practices Act. Our budget is driven by fixed costs relating to scribe services for our twice-a-month meetings and membership in the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissioners, which keeps us current with changes or proposed changes in our regulatory responsibilities. Our variable costs are determined by the number of permits we process which entail legal ad fees for hearings and costs for required certified mailing of determinations; these fees are paid by the applicant and are returned to the town's General Fund. When we issue an Order of Conditions for activity in a resource area the applicant is required by law to register these conditions at the Registry of Deeds. After the work is completed the applicant can request the Commission to inspect the work and issue a Certificate of Compliance which removes the lien from the deed.

The Town of Ashfield owns conservation land adjacent to the trail to the Lookout across Hawley Road from the Trustees of Reservations Bear Swamp trailhead. Approximately 15 acres were given to the town by Esther D. & Philip H. Steinmetz in 1977. The sign at the entrance to the property reads, "Brewer Tatro Memorial Woods." We are always open to suggestions on how to build awareness and appreciation for this open space and how best to encourage appropriate recreational use of it.

The Commission continues to work with the Board of Health on the resolution of problems caused by beaver activity. The Board of Health Agent can issue a permit to remove beavers if the flooding caused by the dams impacts wells, septic systems, and residences.

In addition to the regulatory responsibility cited above, we assist applicants with Chapter 91 Licensing. Ashfield Lake is over 10 acres in size and defined as a "Great Pond" which requires that all new docks and anchored floats be licensed. We review and sign off on applications for land conservation efforts of organizations such as The Franklin Land Trust and The Trustees of Reservations. We support the preservation of habitats for rare, threatened and endangered species. We have concerns about the impact of invasive species and how we as a commission can pursue programs to halt their advance.

In June Lester Garvin stepped down as chair, after many years in that role. We are grateful to Lester for his many contributions to the commission and for his gracious offer to continue as a commission member.

In August Anne Capra Madocks resigned as a Commission member. We miss her valuable contribution as scribe. Kate Kerivan was appointed to take her place. Kate has an undergraduate degree in plant science together with graduate degrees in environment studies and landscape design. She has worked for conservation agencies and a municipal parks and recreation department. She started Bug Hill Organic Berry Farm in 2010 where she managed the land for the purpose of enhancing habitat for native plant and animal species.

Respectfully submitted,

Conservation Commission

Phillip Lussier, Chair	Lester Garvin
Brian Clark	Kate Kerivan
Janet Clark	

Council on Aging

It our pleasure to give the annual report of the Council on Aging to the residents of Ashfield. Ashfield, Buckland and Shelburne share the Senior Center in Shelburne Falls.

There are 662 residents in Ashfield over the age of 60. Here in Ashfield, the seniors meet the first Thursday of every month at the Congregational Church and have a small luncheon with a speaker or entertainment. All seniors are welcome to attend.

This past year, Ashfield seniors enjoyed meals and entertainment at Elmers, the Lake House, the Church, and outside at the lake. There is a lot of activities happening at the Shelburne Senior Center on a daily basis. If you unable to drive, the Senior Center has three buses that will transport you to and from the center.

The Council on Aging encourages residents to attend meetings and they welcome suggestions for new programs and services. The Council on Aging is also always looking for new entertainment and speakers for their monthly dinners. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

We want to thank the staff at the Senior Center, staff at the town office, and the Ashfield Select Board for their continued support.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashfield Council on Aging

Douglas Field, Chair

Nina Laurie

Franklin Wickland

Anne Yuryan

Steven Zamojski

Cultural Council

In 2017-2018, the Ashfield Cultural Council partially or totally funded 20 projects selected from 31 applications and dispersed \$4600.

The grant program supports the arts, the humanities and the applied sciences. We give priority to locally-run projects that will be held in, or near, Ashfield and can be enjoyed by many in our community. Our chosen recipients this year have offerings for all ages, such as ukulele lessons and a concert at the Senior Center, a balloon-twisting workshop, a puppet show at the library, support for music education for our children. There is a workshop offered by Franklin County Land Trust about photography of animals in the wild and a program on songbirds of the Northeast. We continue to value local theater productions - Double Edge Theatre's Uplifting the Next Generation program and Ashfield Community Theater's spring play. Support was given to the well-loved Plainfield Congregational Church's (free) Concerts at 7 program. The Art Garden in Shelburne Falls draws people from Ashfield to its wonderful programs - including the Hilltown Draw-Around.

We hope that you take part in some of these programs and do consider applying for a grant for your own project. For further information on the Massachusetts Cultural Council programs and the Ashfield Cultural Council visit www.mass-culture.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Willis, Secretary

Emergency Management

It is our pleasure to provide the emergency management annual report to the residents of Ashfield. In 2017, our neighbors in the Town of Conway had a tornado blow through their town. Although this tornado, did not hit Ashfield, some parts of Ashfield sustained heavy wind damage from this tornado. This consisted of trees down on Creamery Road, car damage on Pfersick Road, and home damage on Conway Road. There were also electrical wires down through town. This was the only severe weather the town experienced in 2017.

The Emergency Manager is required to attend the Massachusetts Emergency Management meetings every quarter in Agawam. These meeting are very informational and keeps us up to date on all information pertaining to emergency preparedness.

The Town of Ashfield still utilizes the One Call system (Blackboard Connect). This system enables us to contact residents in town in case of an emergency or other event that would be of interest to a majority of residents. The Emergency Manager, Town Clerk, and Town Administrator are the administrators of this system.

If there is an emergency in Town that is expected to last for a while, the Emergency Team (Emergency Manager, Assistant Emergency Manager, Fire Chief, Police Chief, and their emergency personnel) will always be available to help.

We want to thank the Select Board, Town Administrator, and Town Clerk for their support throughout the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Field – Ashfield Emergency Manager

Paul Monohon – Ashfield Assistant Emergency Manager

Finance Committee

During 2017, the Finance Committee turned their attention to long-term trends that they believe will affect the Town of Ashfield. In particular, they concerned themselves with the financial implications of such developments.

They started with information from the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts to learn more about broad-based demographic and economic trends in our area. Because school expenses constitute over half of the town budget, they also traced Ashfield's history of school-related costs over the past ten years, for both the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) and vocational education. In addition, they compiled comparative data about median household income, average single-family tax bills, and property taxes as a percentage of median income for Franklin county and MTRSD towns. Finally, they examined all our other town expense items over the past 10 years to determine those areas of high and low growth. What they've learned in this process should help them better prepare long term financial plans and budgets for the town.

Clearly major capital budget items need advance planning in order to adequately finance them. Working with the Select Board, we identified these major areas as funding priorities over the next 3-5 years: broadband development, highway bridges, library renovations, and town hall renovations.

In addition, we focused on the need to analyze and remedy any compensation inequities, both internal and external, for town employees. To this end, the town hired a consultant to gather and analyze information about comparative job descriptions and salaries in Ashfield and surrounding communities. Based on that work, we've established position classifications and competitive salary ranges that should help us more equitably compensate our employees in the coming years.

We are pleased to report that as of February 2018 the town's financial position is very sound. Our Stabilization Fund stands at \$490,759 and available Free Cash is \$338,845. The combined amount of \$829,604 represents financial reserves of approximately 16% of our town's \$5.3 million annual budget, and our policies call for it being at least 10-15%.

Members of the Committee:

Ted Murray, Chair

Carol Lebold

Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Secretary

Lindy Gougeon

Carl Satterfield, Secretary

Fire Department

The Ashfield Fire Department continued to be very busy in 2017. As shown in the table below, the Fire Department responded to one hundred and sixty-six calls, of which seventy-six were medical and ninety were fire. July was the busiest month with a total of twenty-one calls, Thursdays the busiest day with a total of thirty-one calls, and 6 pm to 9 pm was the busiest time with a total of thirty-three calls.

Year	Fire Calls	Medical Calls	Total Calls
2017	90	76	166
2016	83	101	184
2015	72	102	174
2014	87	107	194
2013	71	92	163

The Department is very thankful for the help of our mutual aid partners, and the Department stands ready to assist them in their time of need. Ashfield responded to five mutual aid calls, and received help five times from mutual aid partners Conway, Buckland, Goshen, Plainfield, Hawley, and Shelburne Falls. Mutual aid supported Ashfield with a hazmat spill, a missing person search, a structure fire, a water rescue, and an ice rescue.



Throughout the year, the Fire Department conducted and attended trainings per State requirements. The Department continued to interact regularly and seamlessly with dispatch and the Ashfield Police Department in order to provide superior service to the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Delmar Haskins, Fire Chief

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments provides a variety of services, programming, and advocacy to the municipalities of Franklin County and to the greater Franklin County region. Our Planning Department assists with local planning issues, such as zoning and local hazard mitigation planning, and also works on larger regional projects. Our municipal service programs — Collective Purchasing, Cooperative Public Health, Cooperative Inspection, and Town Accounting — are available to any municipality that needs them. Partnership for Youth continues to provide substance use and chronic disease prevention. And our Regional Preparedness and Homeland Security Programs provide a variety of aid and assistance to our first responders and health emergency officials. The FRCOG's 2017 Annual Report, available in April of 2018 and on www.frcog.org shortly thereafter, will highlight our work over the past year. Specific services to the Town of Ashfield in 2017 are listed below.

Collective Bidding & Purchasing Program

Ashfield contracted with the FRCOG to receive collective bid pricing for up to 24 different Highway Products and Services. Total estimated highway needs for FY18 is \$562,679.

The Town participated in the Fuel Oil & Diesel Fuel bid, and Belding Library participated in the Fuel Oil bid.

Ashfield participated in the Elevator Maintenance collective contract.

The Chief Procurement Officer issued a Designer Services bid process for Steeple Repairs at 412 Main St.

Cooperative Public Health Service

Ashfield is not a member of the health district, but does benefit from regional services it provides.

Staff coordinated vaccine availability and supplies for a flu clinic held at the Shelburne Senior Center serving 96 area residents, and a Flu Clinic/Emergency Dispensing Site Drill for Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, and Shelburne held at the Mohawk Trail Regional School that served 76 area residents.

Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program

- Staff issued 120 building permits, 39 electrical permits & 35 plumbing/gas permits for Ashfield in 2017. Sixteen (16) Certificates of Inspection were issued.

Partnership for Youth

- Staff conducted a Teen Health Survey to assess teen attitudes and behavior among middle and high school students. Staff reported to Mohawk Trail Regional School administrators on results from 156 Mohawk students, representing 72% of the 8th, 10th, and 12th grade classes. Survey data meets federal requirements for the school and is valuable for grant-writing and program planning.
- Staff worked with the Ashfield Police Department to complete 1 round of alcohol compliance checks at open licensed establishments, a strategy proven to be effective at reducing youth substance abuse. One hundred percent (100%) of establishments in Ashfield were in compliance at the checks.

Planning and Development Department

- Staff worked with the FRTA to establish the Freedoms Shuttle and Bus Pass that assists individuals in treatment and recovery for substance abuse in accessing support services. The shuttle serves the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, and Conway.
- Staff worked with the Franklin Land Trust to protect natural and scenic land on the Route 112 Scenic Byway in Ashfield with funding provided through the National Scenic Byway Program.
- Staff reviewed and provided feedback on a draft policy for Town participation in the Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program.
- Staff continued to provide technical assistance to the Ashfield Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Committee with funds from the 2017 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant program.
- Staff conducted a traffic count on Route 116 as part of the regional Traffic Counting Program.
- Staff provided 3 new, free bike racks for the Belding Memorial Library through the regional Bicycle Parking Program coordinated by the FRCOG.
- Staff assisted the Selectboard and a working group in preparing a draft Large Scale Industrial & Commercial Facilities Zoning Bylaw.
- Staff provided technical assistance to with respect to recreational marijuana legislation and zoning.
- Staff pursued State Legislation to create a Special Designation for the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership region covering 11 West County towns, including Ashfield, to bring additional financial and technical

resources to support Natural Resource Based Economic Development, Forest Conservation & Municipal Financial Sustainability.

Regional Emergency Preparedness

- The Franklin County Citizen Corps program sponsored a full scale regional sheltering exercise at the MTRSD High School in March. The thirty-seven participants included members of the Citizen Corps team, ham radio operators, and public health and safety officials from Ashfield, Buckland, Heath, and Shelburne.

Special Projects

- Staff organized and facilitated educational information meetings for members of Town energy committees, including presenting information on various topics and conducting follow-up communication.

Town Accounting Program

- Staff produced biweekly vendor warrants, and monthly budget reports to all officials and dept. heads.
- At year end, staff completed Free Cash certification, and Schedule A was submitted. In addition, staff provided assistance in completing the Recap for tax rate submission.
- Customized reports for committees and departments were developed and distributed.
- Staff assisted with the annual audit.
- All accounting data was accessible over a secure internet connection to a server at the FRCOG office. Staff completed backups daily and there was no unscheduled down time.

Workshops & Training

The following list represents the FRCOG workshops and training sessions that Ashfield public officials, staff, and residents attended, and the number in attendance.

Municipal Official Continuing Education Series

Marijuana Legislation Update — 1

Climate Change Adaptation — 2

Short Term Rentals from A to Z: Building Code, Health Code, and Zoning — 3

Partnership for Youth

Social Justice: Health Equity & Race — 1 from Mohawk Trail Regional School District

Planning, Conservation, and Development

Strengthening Your Town's Agricultural Commission — 1

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Stop the Bleed/Tourniquet Use — 1

Wide Area Search Methods — 1

Handheld GPS Unit — 1

Pediatric Psychological First Aid — 1

Warm Zone Operations/Triage — 1

Emergency Operation Center: Operations and Planning — 1

Mass Casualty Incident Day for Emergency Medical Services — 1

Mental Health First Aid — 1

Family Reunification — 3

Cooperative Building Inspection Program

As you know, your town receives building, plumbing, gas, and wiring inspection and zoning enforcement services through the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program (FCCIP), a forty-two year old shared services housed at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). We thank your town for your continued participation in the FCCIP, which allows small towns to have access to professional staff and state-of-the art technology.

In 2017, we issued 2,564 permits, including a significant number of insulation upgrade, solar array, and wood/pellet stove permits. A total of 29 new dwelling units were constructed in our 15 member town.

Our online permitting program went live on July 1, 2011 and has issued 16,072 building, electrical, plumbing/gas permits since then. The program allows you to apply, pay for, and track the progress of any permit online, saving you time and visits to our office in Greenfield. The program has 4,574 registered users. You can find it at www.frcog.org under the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program. Our website also included helpful information on inspection requirements, permit costs, and contractor licensing.

In 2017, the FCCIP processed the following permits for Ashfield:

Residential Building Permits	73
Commercial Building Permits	7
Sheet Metal/Duct Permits	1
Electrical Permits	39
Plumbing Permits	15
Gas Permits	20
Certificates of Inspection	16
Solid Fuel	24
Fire Protection	0
Tent	14

We would like to remind all residents of the importance of applying for permits for work done. Building, Electrical and Plumbing/Gas permits are required by law and are an essential step in ensuring the safety of our communities. Please feel free to call our office with any building or zoning questions at 413-774-3167, extension 2.

Franklin Regional Retirement System

The Franklin Regional Retirement System is a government agency that serves the 530 retirees, 51 beneficiaries, 987 active employees, and 557 inactive members of the towns and agencies in Franklin County. We are organized under Chapter 34b, and subject to the provisions of Chapter 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws. We receive oversight on the state level from the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission (PERAC). We contract with an independent auditor to do a full audit of our system each year. We also contract with an actuary to perform a complete actuarial valuation every two years. PERAC audits our operations and financial records every three years.

The retirement benefit we provide replaces participation in the Social Security system and is described as a “defined benefit”, which means that we pay monthly retirement benefits based on the age, salary, and number of years worked at the time a member of our system retires. To be a member, an employee in one of our government units must be working in a permanent position scheduled at 20 hours or more per week and earning \$5,000 or greater annually. Funding of these benefits begins with deductions from the member, and, combined with matching funds from the employing unit, are invested in a mix of stocks, bonds, and indexed funds. Investment earnings are a large part of the funding of retirement benefits, and the allocation of those funds are spread to a variety of sectors to take advantage of positive activity as it occurs in each sector. Please make note of our investment performance percentages in the chart on the next page.

Up until 1988, we were a “pay-as-you-go” system. In 1988 it was legislated that we begin saving to become “fully funded” over the ensuing 40 years. Fully funded means we have enough in reserves to pay for all the current and future potential benefits of our present membership. At the end of 2016, we are 75% funded at 28 years (70%) into the 40 year mandate. Our fiscal year is the calendar year, therefore our annual report is not filed until May of the subsequent year, and as a consequence the information provided herein will be a year old by the time you read this.

Current reports and information can be found on our website:
www.FRRSMA.com.

The full PERAC report can be read on the “Finances” page of our website.

Green Communities

The Green Communities Committee was formed to apply for Green Communities grant money from the state in 2011. The Town achieved the Green Communities designation in December 2011 with a grant authorization of \$141,025. The Committee has worked hard to allocate these funds to decrease town energy use. This year we have taken part in further tightening the Town Hall, by replacing the draft door in the back meeting room and additional insulation work in the basement in conjunction with the mold removal project. We acquired an audit for insulating the library and replacing the HVAC system, including the potential addition of air conditioning. Planning for those projects are contingent on completion of roof repairs, obtaining funding, and coordinating with related activities such as preparation for hosting the Broadband hub.

Brian Clark

Mary Quigley

Jen Williams

Highland Ambulance EMS Inc.

Operations. Highland Ambulance is the primary ambulance service provider for the towns of Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield and Williamsburg. Highland also provides primary back-up in the town of Worthington in support of Hilltown Ambulance of Huntington. Paramedics are on duty at Highland's station in Goshen from 6 AM until midnight seven days a week. During the midnight to 6 AM time period, Highland EMT's are assisted by Paramedics from other ambulance companies when the service of a Paramedic is required. Highland's active roster as of June 30, 2017 consisted of 36 members including 19 Paramedics and 17 EMT's.

Dr. Raymond Conway, our long term Medical Director, retired and is replaced by Dr. Peter Morse, MD.

Mission. The mission of Highland Ambulance EMS, Inc. is to provide the full range of emergency medical services to the member communities. These services include:

- Providing training and certification testing for all first responders
- Providing mandatory inoculations for all first responders
- Running blood pressure clinics for residents of the six towns
- Developing and practicing emergency response plans with the schools and camps in the member towns
- Conducting health and safety classes for the schools
- Working with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and Homeland Security to develop emergency response plans for the member towns
- Providing mutual aid and paramedic intercept services to the neighboring communities
- Providing transport services
- Providing standby service for major emergency situations, e.g. house fire
- Providing standby service for major community events such as the Chesterfield Parade, the Ashfield Fall Festival and the Cummington Fair
- Responding to all 911 calls that may require emergency medical services

Emergency Responses. During FY 2017 Highland responded to 626 emergency calls of which 143 were no service. These are broken down by Town as follows:

Ashfield 109	Chesterfield 80	Cummington 65	Goshen 70
Plainfield 73	Williamsburg 195	Other 34	Total 626

Training. The following is a partial list of special training events held:

- CPR trainings for Emergency Service Personnel, Police, & firefighters.
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
- Medical Management Classes.
- ALS/BLS interface classes for area EMTs.
- Several Paramedics had the opportunity to participate in a cadaver lab to practice bone injections and advanced airways.
- Mass Casualty Incident training class for all area EMT's and 1st Responders.
- Basic EMT refresher courses.
- Paramedic refresher courses.

Community Involvement. Highland provided support to our communities including:

- Ambulance Coverage for Community events including the Chesterfield 4th of July Parade, the Cummington Fair, the Ashfield Fall Festival, Hilltown Junior Olympics.
- Evacuation drill at the Sanderson Academy in Ashfield
- On April 19th, 2017 Highland hosted a Board & Finance committee meeting with all 6 of our participating towns.
- Met with the administrators of the new Swift River Addiction Center in Plainfield to discuss 911 responses.
- Highland hosted a Red Cross blood drive here at our station.
- EMT coverage at the Chesterfield Gorge for a 5K run.

Operating Expenses in FY 2017: \$622,113.06

Cash on Hand – June 30, 2017	
Operating Funds	-\$1,990.75
Ambulance Fund	\$151,173.67
Memorial Fund	\$7,455.30
Dresser Fund	\$4,062.89
Net Income	\$10,167.63

Our six towns contributed \$238,430 of our total operational budget, based upon town assessments. The balance came from billings to insurance companies, Medicare, Medicaid and contributions. Our collection rate is approximately 94% of our billables.

Grants. We applied for a grant through the AFG (Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant) in the Fall of 2016 for power stretchers to help reduce lifting injuries. The grant was unsuccessful due to lack of funding. We will apply again in the next round.

Building Project. During this fiscal year, Highland Ambulance completed the building of our permanent facility for its operations and moved in during July of 2016. On July 17th, 2016, Highland held a formal open house and flag raising ceremony dedicating the facility to the memory of Christopher (Kit) Smith, our long-term president of the Board and the Williamsburg representative who had passed away several months prior. Anticipated costs of the entire project were close to \$1,000,000 with a mortgage loan for \$600,000 from Greenfield Savings Bank, which means that direct cash contributions and in-kind donations had a value of approximately \$400,000. The Board and staff are deeply appreciative for all the dollar donations and in-kind services we received over the year to make possible the construction of our new facility.

Respectfully Submitted,

Highland Ambulance Board of Directors:

Ashfield	Patricia Thayer
Chesterfield	Spencer Timm
Cummington	Amanda Savoie
At-Large	Cassandra Morrey
At-Large	Douglas Mollison

Goshen	Donald Boisvert
Plainfield	Edward Morann
Williamsburg	Leslie Smith
At-Large	Bernard Forgea

Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) was created in 1989 by a group of dedicated volunteers who had the vision to seek a regional solution to help small towns attain sustainability and environmental objectives.

Each Town appoints two representatives to serve on the HRMC Board. Board Officers for FY17 included: Joe Kearns, Chair (Middlefield); John Chandler, Vice Chair (Chesterfield); and, Paul Wetzel, Treasurer (Williamsburg).

The HRMC assists hilltown member-communities with managing their solid waste including: municipal waste hauling and disposal bid administration, recycling administration, hazardous waste disposal, and, DEP compliance and technical assistance. In FY17 those services included:

- Liaison between Towns and MassDEP on compliance matters.
- Execution of an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event
- Program management of Transfer Station Recyclables including collection, hauling and recycling of tires, electronic waste, universal waste (including free recycling of mercury thermostats and re-chargeable batteries), and Freon removal from appliances.
- Transfer Station operations and compliance monitoring including informal HRMC site visits as well as the formal, annual DEP 3rd Party Inspection and Reporting.
- Preparation and submittal of DEP annual surveys and reports.
- DEP Grant Administration including grant writing and reporting.

In addition to the managing the day to day business and program operations of the HRMC, the HRMC Administrator also serves as a representative on behalf of its member Towns to the MRF Municipal Advisory Board, the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee and, the Western Mass Regional Recycling Coordinator group; advocates with local, regional, and State officials; and, is available to serve as a liaison to the DEP on transfer station operations and compliance related issues.

In FY17, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced their Recycling Dividend Program Grants under the annual Sustainable Materials Recovery Program (SMRP). All ten HRMC member-towns were eligible for and received grants submitted for them through the HRMC. In total, the HRMC Towns received \$ 24,200.00 in grant funding to be used to further enhance recycling programs within their communities. Grant applications for FY18 were submitted in June 2017 for a total of more than \$ 42,000 in funding requests.

The HRMC has an annual operation's assessment that is approved by each

Town at their annual Town meeting. The annual Assessment Budget is based on tonnage and population. In FY17, the combined assessment for all ten towns was \$ 49,575. The Assessments offset base operating expenses. Recycling program collection costs (other than MRF recyclables) are pass-thru expenses from the HRMC to the Towns to best maximize the economy of scale and to enable the HRMC administrator to have review and oversight of vendor relations, and program operations. In FY17, the HRMC acquired one new MRF container in an on-going plan to remove containers from the HRMC fleet (purchased 1989) that are no longer road-worthy. Cost for the new container was shared by those Towns utilizing the HRMC fleet.

During the past year, the HRMC member-Towns collectively diverted 975 tons of recyclable materials to the Springfield MRF. In addition, the Town of Plainfield diverted bulky rigid plastics; the Towns of Cummington, Plainfield, Westhampton and Williamsburg diverted EPS (Styrofoam); and, the Towns of Plainfield and Williamsburg diverted pellet bags. The Town of Williamsburg continued to serve as the HRMC regional mattress recycling facility. The Town of Westhampton served as the host-site for the HRMC's annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event. In FY17, all Towns began recycling household fire extinguishers through a free program administered by HRMC in collaboration with George Propane and Pittsfield Fire.

Last year, 8 member-Towns adopted recycling goals of 50% with the intent of increasing quantity and improving the quality of materials being recycled at their transfer stations and to reduce waste being landfilled. In 2016, the HRMC Towns had an average recycling rate of 32.1% and in 2017, 31.9% . In 2016, The Town of Ashfield had a recycling rate of 41.4% and in 2017 42.1%. The Town recycled 202 tons of recyclables at the MRF in 2017.

This past year, HRMC re-invigorated the Compost Bin distribution program and the Towns of Chesterfield, Westhampton, and Williamsburg offered special subsidized pricing to encourage at home composting for their residents.

HRMC Administrator: Kathleen A. Casey

HRMC Member Towns:

Ashfield	Middlefield
Chesterfield	Plainfield
Cummington	Westhampton
Goshen	Williamsburg
Huntington	Worthington

Highway Department

Once again it was a busy year for the Highway Department

Chapter 90 resurfacing and related work was done on Buckland Rd and a section of Hawley Rd. Other Chapter 90 work was postponed until early summer of 2018 because of scheduling difficulties with the contractor due to all the inclement weather in the early summer of 2017.

The municipal small bridge project on Apple Valley Road has gotten underway; we have an executed agreement with MassDOT and have selected Gill Engineering to do the surveying and design work.

Other bridge work included the beginning phase of design work for a beam end repair on bridge A 13 020; Apple Valley Rd near the intersection of Scott Rd. Repair and replacement of a segment of the bridge deck on bridge A 13 023 on Bullitt Rd was completed.



Cody Belval joined the crew in 2017 as Alan Taylor moved on to a different pursuit in a neighboring town. I welcome Cody and thank Alan for his work and dedicated service to the town and wish him all the best.

Thank You to the many Boards, Committees, Departments and Town Hall

staff for your support throughout the year.

Thank You to Todd Senecal, Jack Clark, Bryan Mollison, Cody Belval and Nick Nye for your dedicated good work.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas G Poissant, Highway Superintendent

Photo Courtesy of Gregory Thorp

Mary Priscilla Howes Fund

The Mary Priscilla Howes Fund was established with initial funds of \$11,116 during 1989 in memory of a much loved Ashfield resident. The Finance Committee administers the fund. Income from the fund is to be used for cultural and historical projects and events that will benefit the citizens of Ashfield.

The balance of the Mary Priscilla Howes fund, as of February 2018, was \$12,204.

The committee received no grant applications during 2017.

Applications for a grant may be obtained at the town office or through the Finance Committee, and they should be submitted to the Finance Committee.

Members of the Committee:

Ted Murray, Chair

Carol Lebold

Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Secretary

Lindy Gougeon

Carl Satterfield, Secretary

Mohawk Trail Regional School District Report of the Superintendent

Hawlemont Regional School District

During 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) launched a celebration campaign to share the performance of MA public schools relative to the rest of the nation and the world. The big picture message put forth by MA DESE was that our public school students are performing at a very high level, which includes the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the Hawlemont Regional School District.

- MA public schools and students are #1 in the U.S. in reading and math according to the 2015 NAEP exam (National Assessment of Educational Progress), which is a national assessment of student knowledge in various subject areas. MA public schools are also #1 in the nation for the 4th straight year in the Education Week Research Center's annual *Quality Counts 2018* report.
- MA public schools and students are #1 in the world in reading according to the 2016 PISA exam (Program for International Student Assessment), which is an international assessment that measures 15-year-old students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy every three years.
- MA public schools and students are #1 in Advanced Placement (AP) success in the country (2017), which is measured by the percentage of students who scored 3 or higher on college level AP exams. Approximately 44.1% of the students in the Massachusetts' class of 2016 took at least one AP exam while they were in high school, and 31% of these students scored 3 or higher out of a possible 5. Many colleges and universities grant credit for scores of 3, 4 or 5 on AP exams.

The results of the 2017 MA Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) indicate that Mohawk students continued to meet the high bar reflected in Massachusetts' several #1 academic performance rankings being touted by MA DESE. In order to graduate from high school, Mohawk students must demonstrate proficiency on the MCAS in three subject areas: (1) English Language Arts, (2) Mathematics and (3) Science, Technology and Engineering.

In 2017, Mohawk high school students scored within 2 points, plus or minus, of the state average in all three subject areas.

In terms of college readiness, 70 Mohawk students took a total of 107 AP exams last year. These tests ranged from English to Math to Science to Social Studies. Of the 107 AP exams taken, 67.3% achieved a grade of 3 or higher, which was also within 2 percentage points of the state average. With regard to the SAT college entrance exam, Mohawk has outperformed the state in reading, writing and math over the past 5 years. Each year, approximately 80% of Mohawk graduates attend either a 4-year or 2-year college. Examples of colleges attended by Mohawk students in 2017 include George Washington University, Mount Holyoke College, Clarke University, Franklin Pierce University and UMASS Amherst (Commonwealth Honors College).

2017 also marked the closing of Heath Elementary School, which was a recommendation that resulted from the 2016 strategic planning process entitled Building Educational Sustainability and Trust (BEST) led by the Mohawk School Committee. Ultimately, the voters of Heath decided that enrollment in their local school was too low and that their children would receive a higher quality education in nearby Hawlemont Regional Elementary School. In the fall of 2017, over 30 Heath students attended Hawlemont through a tuition agreement reached by the Mohawk and Hawlemont School Committees. This school building restructuring saved the Mohawk District approximately \$400,000 in expenses while simultaneously benefitting Hawlemont approximately \$350,000 in tuition revenues. Most importantly, the Heath elementary students are now attending a vibrant school and are receiving a high-quality education.

Hawlemont Regional Elementary School is in the midst of a renaissance that has been driven largely by the school's transition to a hands-on, agriculturally-based curriculum, which is informally referred to as the HAY Program (Hawlemont, Agriculture and You). Since the introduction of the HAY Program just 2 years ago, enrollment at Hawlemont has increased dramatically from 102 students to 164 students! Approximately half of this growth is from families outside of the district choosing Hawlemont through School Choice, and the other half is from the tuitioning of Heath students to Hawlemont after the closure of Heath Elementary. All of this enrollment growth, however, is

connected to the overwhelmingly positive community response to the HAY Program. Additionally, the influx of tuition revenues has strengthened both educational programming and the financial sustainability of Hawlemont.

Other highlights from 2017 include (1) the Mohawk District revised its vision, mission and core values; (2) preschool enrollment increases at Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School and Sanderson Academy are driving long-term growth in both schools; (3) Colrain Central School is exploring the creation of a service learning educational program; (4) Mohawk and Greenfield Community College collaborated to create a new high school Robotics course to be offered in the spring of 2018; (5) Mohawk began exploring the potential move of 6th grade to Mohawk in the fall of 2019; (6) the Mohawk and Hawlemont school communities expressed interest in exploring an alternative structured learning program more informally referred to as a Blizzard Bag program; (7) the Mohawk School Committee and the Mohawk District Education Association reached agreement on a new 3-year contract; (8) half of the BSE asbestos removal project was completed; and (9) the Mohawk and Hawlemont districts supported the MA Rural Schools Coalition efforts to advocate on behalf of rural public schools across the Commonwealth.

While every school year is chock-full of activity, I do wish to take a moment to express our collective sincere gratitude to our townspeople for making all of this important work possible. On behalf of our students, I thank the entire Mohawk and Hawlemont school communities for your dedicated support of our children's education. THANK YOU!!

Respectfully submitted,

Michael A. Buoniconti
Superintendent of Schools
Mohawk Trail Regional School District
Hawlemont Regional School District

Sanderson Academy

It is my pleasure to continue to serve as the Sanderson Academy principal. 2017 saw generally strong academic performances from students, some staffing additions, and work continuing on a number of mandates from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our enrollment as of the end of the 2017 was 150 students in grades preschool through sixth grade. The number of students at each grade level was as follows: 46 children in the preschool, 20 children in kindergarten, 12 children in first grade, 18 children in grade two, grade three had 14 students, fourth grade had 17 students, fifth grade had 12 students and 11 students were in our sixth grade class. All classes were grouped heterogeneously.

The faculty for the 2017-2018 school year consisted of eleven full-time classroom teachers, one special education teacher, one full-time reading teacher, and one full-time math interventionist. This includes the addition of one kindergarten class. Specialists providing services in our school include a school adjustment counselor three days per week, a speech/language pathologist that services students four days per week, a full time nurse, and occupational and physical therapists, each for less than one half day per week. We have art, music, and physical education teachers instructing three days per week each. They provide students with one hour of class time weekly in each subject area. Additional time is offered for band and chorus students in the upper grades. We also have a part-time library manager and twelve paraprofessionals. We welcomed Chrissy Schoellkopf as the second kindergarten teacher. We welcomed Deb Hatt as a paraprofessional. Denise Sessions transitioned from the Cafeteria Manager to the School Secretary with the retirement of Jacki Clark. We wish Jacki a wonderful retirement after 31 years at Sanderson Academy. Wendy Mimitz returned to the Cafeteria Manager position she held in the past. In addition, we have four part-time before and after-school staff. The program allows students in grades preschool through second grade to receive care from 7:30 to 8:30 and until 5:30 each day for a daily fee.

The spring of 2016 saw Sanderson Academy students again performing well on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System (MCAS) tests. In the three areas assessed, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology, our students performed at levels, which were similar to or better than the performances of other students in our District or State.

The wood pellet heating system came online in December of 2017. The previous oil system was reaching the end of its service life and will function as a

back-up heat source, while the pellet boilers will provide 90% of the heating needs. The boilers are low emissions and fully automated.

By making this necessary heating system replacement with a pellet boiler, the project was eligible for a DOER SAPHIRE grant. The grant covers 75% of the cost. The SAPHIRE Program promotes renewable thermal heating and cooling and efficiency upgrades in public schools and state public housing.

School safety remains a focus at Sanderson Academy. We have monthly fire drills, at least three lockdown drills a year, and school evacuation drills. Many of these drills include local and state emergency service personnel. We appreciate the support of the Ashfield and Plainfield emergency personnel.

Thank you, citizens of Ashfield and Plainfield for all you do to support your community school!

Respectfully submitted,

Emma Liebowitz M.Ed., Principal

Special Education and Pupil Services

The Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont Regional Special Education Department serves students in the Sanderson, Colrain, Hawlemont, Buckland-Shelburne, and Mohawk Middle and High Schools. The primary function is to ensure that students with an IEP (Individual Education Plan) or a 504 are being serviced at a level required to make effective progress with supports outlined in their IEP or 504. According to state data, The Mohawk Trail and Hawlemont district have about 21% and 24% respectively of their student population receiving special education services. Those services are in several areas; speech and language, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), counseling and academics. With the closing of Heath Elementary for the school year 2017-18, the support services were shifted to the Hawlemont Elementary School. Every school has at least one special education teacher. The OT and PT spend about one day in each school, Mohawk has a full time Speech Language Assistant and a part time Speech Language Pathologist, BSE has a full time Speech Language Pathologist and Assistant, Colrain and Hawlemont share a full time Speech Language Pathologist and each have a full time Speech Assistant, and Sanderson has a four day a week Speech Pathologist. Sanderson has three days of a School Adjustment Counselor and is sharing a School Psychologist from the Middle School/High School one day a week, BSE and Colrain share an Adjustment Counselor and each have a School Psychologist two and one days a week respectively, Hawlemont has a four day a week School Psychologist, and the Middle and High School have a full time Adjustment Counselor and School Psychologist four days a week. The level of services in each building is based on population and level of services legally required by an IEP. Changes made from last year were due to the shifting of Heath students to Hawlemont and the increased population of Pre-School students at BSE, Sanderson and Hawlemont.

The district is legally obligated to support a SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee). Over the past year the parents that had worked hard to initiate this group, have been unable to continue. We thank them for their support and for the best SEPAC the district has supported in many years. We continue to advocate for a SEPAC and offer parent workshops throughout the year.

The district continues to support a substantially separate program for students requiring the support of BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst). The program is located at BSE and currently serves six students. When the program began, students spent more than 50% of their time within the program. Currently those students are in their mainstream classes more than 60% of the time.

The district initiated a Language Based Program at Colrain Elementary School this year. The LBP (Language Based Program), supports students with a primary disability in reading. They require a high level of support both in their general education classroom and direct reading instruction from a Special Education Teacher also certified as a Reading Specialist. The program is supported by Colrain's Special Education Teacher and a part time reading specialist.

To support students district-wide with a specific learning disability in reading; three teachers (Sanderson, Hawlemont, and BSE) took a summer intensive course and were certified in Orton Gillingham. Orton Gillingham is an instructional approach intended primarily for use with individuals who have difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing of the sort associated with dyslexia. It is most properly understood and practiced as an approach, not a method, program, system, or technique. In the hands of a well-trained and experienced instructor, it is a powerful tool of exceptional breadth, depth, and flexibility.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leann Loomis

Mohawk Trail Regional High School Annual Report of the Co-Principals

Over the course of this year, Mohawk faculty, students, and members of the Local Education Council (LEC) have been engaged in developing a graphic representation of our shared vision for a Mohawk graduate. This graphic representation features habits of mind such as perseverance, creativity, curiosity and self-reflection, as well as habits of the heart such as openness, integrity, kindness, and empathy. In addition to these habits, it also consists of skills needed for college and career readiness, such as reasoning, problem-solving, research and evaluation of information, as well as effective written and oral communication. Through a series of conversations and professional collaboration, our school community has been examining how the curriculum and instruction can prepare students for the future and provide opportunities for all students to hone these skills.

The middle school is located in its own wing at Mohawk, providing a supportive environment for students making the transition from elementary school. Middle school students spend most of their day in classes taught by a team of educators who have a common planning time, enabling them to work together to support and challenge students. Each middle school team is composed of teachers of core courses as well as a Learning Specialist with expertise in Special Education and instructional strategies. Adjustments to the middle school schedule this year provided for a daily homeroom/advisory period, as well as a body break for physical activity and social interaction. Middle school students also explore a variety of enrichment topics through the Related Arts programming that introduces them to subjects they can study in more depth in high school, including Spanish, French, woodshop, art, band, and chorus.

In the high school students have a variety of choices as they fulfill graduation requirements, including ten Advanced Placement (AP) offerings: Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Environmental Science, Physics, U.S. History, and World History. Many students take numerous Advanced Placement courses over their time at Mohawk, and the Class of 2017 had nine students who earned the designation of AP Scholar with Distinction, awarded to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 (out of 5) on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. Educators innovate by developing new courses and increasingly work together to support the needs of diverse learners.

As part of Mohawk's ongoing commitment to strong STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education, this year the school is partnering with Greenfield Community College to offer a Robotics course at

Mohawk that students can take for college credit. The STEM curriculum in 8th grade emphasizes engineering design and cross-disciplinary applications through project-based learning. All middle school students take a Digital Literacy course, assuring that they have a foundation of computer skills and critical literacy. High school students can take the Exploring Computer Science course which uses a national curriculum developed through university and industry collaboration with the National Science Foundation. Mohawk educators across disciplines frequently use Google Classrooms applications and Chromebooks in their instruction. Over the past few years we have shifted to a math curriculum that emphasizes inquiry and problem-solving, and we work closely with faculty from Westfield State University and neighboring school districts to support our teachers in the use of inquiry-based learning approaches.

Expanding our arts offerings, Mohawk introduced an Arts Integration position in the middle school this year. In addition to teaching a studio art course as part of the middle school Related Arts rotation, our Arts Integration teacher partners with classroom educators in the 7th and 8th grade on projects that integrate the arts with core curriculum, such as the 8th grade math lessons associated with the work of Sol LeWitt, the artist whose colorful mural graces Mohawk's front foyer. The Mohawk Arts and Education Council, composed of faculty and staff who are passionate about the arts, continues to provide leadership for our drama programming and other interdisciplinary artistic endeavors at our school, including the all-school musical "Shrek" that featured performances by students from elementary through high school.

This year we introduced two new programs that will become annual traditions. In March Mohawk hosted its first Interactive Open House, featuring presentations and student work from students throughout our district, from elementary to high school. This event brought students, parents and community members into our school to experience the curriculum and participate in learning activities. Another innovation this year was the expansion of the annual Step Up Day activities in early June. Traditionally Step Up Day has focused on providing 6th grade students with an opportunity to visit the middle school in preparation for their experience as incoming 7th graders. This year we used the day as a Step-Up Day for all grades. Current 7th grade students visited the 8th grade team of educators, 8th grade students visited high school classes, 9th and 10th graders all went on college visits (choosing among Westfield State University, the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Williams College, and MCLA [Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts]) and the juniors began their planning for the Senior Capstone project they complete as a graduation requirement. On another day in June a team of educators led a field trip to visit a number of colleges in Boston, introducing

students to more post-secondary options. Activities like the Interactive Open House and the expanded Step Up Day strengthen connections between our school and the community.

Mohawk's diverse athletic programming offers many opportunities of participation for students in grades 7-12. In the 2016-2017 school year, 60% of Mohawk students (259) participated in at least one afterschool sport. Below is a summary of the varsity sports offered at Mohawk:

	Varsity Sports	# of Varsity Sports	Teams (HS-JV-MS)
Winter 2016-2017	Girls and boys basketball, boys and girls alpine skiing, girls and boys nordic skiing, boys and girls indoor track, and wrestling	9	13
Spring 2016-2017	Boys and girls track, softball, baseball, girls and boys tennis, and girls lacrosse co-op	7	11
Fall 2017-2018	golf, girls and boys cross country, boys and girls soccer, volleyball, field hockey, football	8	13

At the mid-point of the 2017-2018 school year, enrollment in grades 7-12 is 398. The seventh grade has 55 students and the eighth grade has 82 students. There are 64 students in grade 9, 57 in 10th grade, 67 juniors, and 66 seniors. Seven students are enrolled in our post-graduate program.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn R. Dole and Marisa Mendonsa, Co-Principals

Ashfield School Department

Vocational, Technical and Agricultural Education

Ashfield maintains a town school department for vocational education students, grades 9 to 12 inclusive. It is financially separate from the Mohawk Trail Regional School District. Our town tuitions our resident students to the Franklin County Technical School (Turners Falls) and Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School (Northampton). Ashfield is responsible for the cost of tuition and transportation for these resident students. In FY 2017 we received state education aid from the Commonwealth (chapter 70 funds) in the amount of \$93,413 which covered only around 20% of eligible cost. We also received chapter 74 'vocational transportation reimbursement' of only \$4,831 which covered only 6.4% of our expense. The transportation reimbursement program has been reduced from 87% of expense in FY 14 down to an estimated 5% of expense for FY 2018. We are working hard to remedy this inequity with the help of our legislators.

Student Enrollment – As you can see, enrollment remained roughly level from FY 2016 to FY 2017. Note, however, that half of this year's students will graduate in June which will account, in large part, for a major reduction in expense for FY 2019.

Franklin County Technical School

School Year	# Grade 9	# Grade 10	# Grade 11	# Grade 12	Total 9-12
2016-2017	2	2	4	3	11
2017-2018	1	2	2	4	9

Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School

School Year	# Grade 9	# Grade 10	# Grade 11	# Grade 12	Total 9-12
2016-2017	0	1	4	1	6
2017-2018	2	0	1	4	7

Congratulations to Franklin Tech graduates Bailey Davenport, Dakota Nye and Khyler Hughes and to Smith School graduate Hunter Roberts – Our June 2017 Graduates.

Appropriation and Estimated Expense for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 – The town appropriated the following amounts for vocational education at the May 2016 + 2017 annual town meetings:

[The current FY 2018 tuition for both Franklin Tech and Smith School is \$16,728].

Item	FY 17 Appropriation	FY 17 Expended	FY 18 Appropriation
Regular Base Tuition	\$343,548	\$278,703.08	\$389,778
Special Educ. Tuition	15,500	2,720.65	13,830
Transportation	102,353	65,953.14	126,292
total	\$461,401	\$347,376.87	\$529,900

Estimated actual expense for 2017-2018 will likely be around \$347,180 which is significantly below the amount appropriated. This is primarily due to four Franklin Tech students who were accepted, but either did not enroll, or left school (returning to Mohawk) in September 2017.

Oversight – Currently, the Finance Committee is responsible for the administration and oversight of the town vocational school department. Each year the Finance Committee and Select Board appoint a Vocational Education Coordinator

Vocational Education Advisory Committee [VEAC] – Representatives from Ashfield, Charlemont, Plainfield and Hawley continue to coordinate and oversee the vocational education programs of the four ‘tuitioning towns’. Three years ago, the committee implemented a cost-savings program using gasoline from the Ashfield Highway Facility. This program was successful and saved the four towns nearly \$18,000 in FY 2017. It is being continued this year.

Poppy Doyle is Mohawk’s member to the committee. Kayce Warren serves as Ashfield’s member and Lynn Taylor has been appointed as alternate. David Newell continues to serve as the VEAC Clerk and administrator.

During the last year, VEAC has concentrated its efforts on the preparation of an amendment to the Mohawk ‘regional agreement’. The amendment is on this

year's annual town meeting warrant, after having been approved by the Mohawk school committee. It will restructure the governance and administration of vocational education in Ashfield and the other three towns.

What the Proposed Amendment to the Mohawk Regional Agreement will Accomplish

Since the 1970s, the four Mohawk towns (Ashfield, Charlemont, Hawley & Plainfield) that are not members of the Franklin Tech Regional School District have been responsible for tuition and transportation costs for students attending vocational and agricultural schools. In 2013 the four towns and Mohawk established an advisory committee to promote cooperation between the towns and school districts, and to seek ways to contain costs.

Over the course of the last two years, VEAC has interacted with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, seeking ways to clarify and improve the management and administration of vocational education in the four towns. The proposed amendment to the regional agreement incorporates the recommendations and advice tendered to us by DESE and has been approved by the Mohawk Regional School Committee.

These are the objectives of the proposed amendment:

- Eliminate obsolete language in the current section of the 'Mohawk Regional Agreement'.
- Retain the rights of students seeking a vocational education as set forth in the current agreement.
- Define the obligation of towns to continue to maintain non-operating school departments for 'vocational education purposes'.
- Clarify responsibility for the payment of tuition costs (which shall be borne by the towns).
- Clarify responsibility for the transportation of students from the four towns (which shall be furnished by Mohawk).
- Establish an assessment method authorizing Mohawk to pay transportation costs and assess the involved towns during the same fiscal year.

- Clarify contract awards for transportation (to be made by Mohawk) subject to the advice and consent of the towns.
- Formally establish an 'Advisory Committee' and define its composition and method of appointment, etc. Up to this point in time, VEAC has operated without any statutory authority or inter-municipal agreement.

Respectfully Submitted

David Newell

Ashfield Vocational Education Advisory and VEAC Clerk (for the four towns)

Mary Lyon Foundation, Inc.

The Mary Lyon Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides innovative support for local education in the nine West County towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Hawley, Heath, Plainfield, Rowe and Shelburne. Named in honor of Buckland-born educator Mary Lyon, who founded Mt. Holyoke College in 1837, the organization provides services and programs to enhance the quality of local education. We are generously supported by many individuals and businesses. Major support this year was provided by the United Way of Franklin County, the Myrtle Atkinson Foundation, People's United Community Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. Our donors, grants and events help support the Harper Gerry Student Assistance Fund, scholarships, mini-grants, Gift Catalog for classroom supplies, annual Community Spelling Bee and a wide variety of pro-active programs.

We were privileged this year to host nationally acclaimed author Luis Urrea for the culmination of our Big Read program which featured his book *Into the Beautiful North*. Presentations were held at Greenfield Community College, Holyoke Community College and the Care Center. This program was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Creative educational projects designed by teachers in pre-K through grade 12 were awarded more than \$8,000 this year through the popular Mini-Grant program. Representatives from each school meet to select innovative, replicable, educational classroom projects. The Mini-Grant program is supported by the United Way and annual Community Spelling Bee which was held this year on November 16. Grand Champions were the Spelling Beans - Curtis Rich, Kathy Lytle and David Henry - sponsored by Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters. Winner of the Best Dressed award was the Mohawk Team LED comprised of Lynn Dole, Emily Willis and Drue Johnson.

The student assistance program generated more than \$10,000 for needy children and their families for such basic necessities as eyeglasses, food vouchers, warm clothes and prescriptions. We received backpacks and school supplies from Blackmer Insurance Agency and the United Way and distributed bags of groceries through the United Way's *Supper for Six* program. This fall the Mary Lyon Foundation received slots for 50 children to participate in Warm the Children. An anonymous donor once again delivered two truckloads of Christmas trees that were decorated by the Mohawk Vocational Program and given to needy families, and the Betty Allen DAR chapter in Northampton contributed warm hats, mittens and scarves.

The Mary Lyon Foundation office is located at Mohawk Trail Regional School. Members of the Board of Directors are Marion Taylor (Past President), Sylvia Orcutt (President), Katherine McKay (Recording Secretary), Karen Fairbrother (Treasurer), Susan Schuman, Peter Stevens, Nancy Eisenstein, Brenda Parrella, Emily Willis and Mohawk Trail Regional School student representatives Violet Rawlings and London Summers. Longtime board members Sharon Hudson and Hugh Knox were recognized for their contributions to local education and given Honorary Lifetime Board of Directors status. Regular volunteers Sandy Gilbert and Rita Jaros are greatly appreciated! Gina Sieber is our Business Manager, and Co-Executive Directors are Sheila Damkoehler and Susan Samoriski.

Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund

The Fund was established under the provisions of the will of Carl H. Nilman for the purpose of providing scholarships to students who desire and are deemed worthy of post high school education or training. Recipients must reside in the School District, be graduates of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School, and be in need of financial assistance.

This year the Awards Subcommittee read 68 applications; 24 from seniors and 44 from graduates. \$34,150.00 was allotted for scholarships and 30% went towards seniors and 70% towards graduates. The Committee felt seniors have multiple scholarship opportunities, whereas these opportunities are limited for graduates. 22 scholarships totaling \$10,000.00 were awarded to seniors (92% of applicants), and 32 scholarships totaling \$24,150.00 were given to graduates (73% of applicants).

From 1991-2017 a total of \$944,125.00 has been awarded in scholarships. Mohawk seniors have received \$290,775.00 and \$653,350.00 has been awarded to graduates.

The same formula for determining what percentages of the fund should be distributed as scholarships, which had been established by the School Committee and the management firm of Bartholomew and Co., was used again this year.

Press releases were published in both the Independent and the Greenfield Recorder in March containing information about the Carl H, Nilman Scholarship Fund.

There are fifteen members on the Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund, one from each of the nine member towns in the district, three at large members appointed by the School Committee, plus a past School Committee, current School Committee member and the chairman of the School Committee. Members from the nine towns are: Sheila Graves (Ashfield), Marion Scott (Buckland), Marge Porrovecchio (Charlemont), Michelle Hillman (Colrain), Gloria Fisher (Heath), Alice Parker (Hawley), Allen Irvine (Plainfield), Marion Taylor (Shelburne) and Laurie Pike (Rowe). Suzanne Crawford is the representative to the School Committee.

Officers are: Marge Porrovecchio and Robin Hartnett, Co-Chairs. and Marion Scott is Secretary. Subcommittees are: Finance: Marion Taylor, Robin Hartnett and Eric Sumner. Scholarship: Marge Porrovecchio, Sheila Graves, Michelle Hillman, Marion Scott and Allen Irvine.

The Mohawk community owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Nilman for his foresight in supporting higher education for the students of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School. The committee members are honored to bring the wishes of his will to fruition.

Students of any age who are graduates of Mohawk (and were living in the nine town area at the time of graduation) are encouraged to apply for scholarships to help meet their continuing education needs. Please call the Guidance Office at Mohawk for information regarding requirements and deadlines.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion E Scott, Secretary

Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee

Full updating of the Ashfield Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) continued in earnest throughout the 2017 year. The updated plan will serve as an effective guide for boards, commissions and committees in helping to create balance between conservation/recreation, and agriculture/forestry practices, as well as other specific types of development proposals. Once completed, the Plan will enable the Town to apply for important grants related to recreational activities and/or conservation measures.

The work has been supported by a DLTA grant through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, which has helped with introducing/expanding topics instrumental to the Town's future balancing act between conservation measures and development. An extensive update of open space mapping also will contribute to this balance, in helping to identify and analyze significant land use patterns.

With additional funding from the Town, the Committee hopes to have the Plan completed by mid-2018. The continuing effort will include an expanded public forum and finalization of community goals/objectives, and seven-year action plans.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Rice, Chair
Anne Capra
Nancy Garvin
Barb Miller

Mollie Babize
Duncan Colter
Judy Haupt
Anne Yuryan

Park Commission

The Park Commission celebrated 2017 with new stainless-steel ladders for the Ashfield Lake dock. we hope to have a diving board installed for this summer. We have purchased new rope and buoys for the swim area and a new handicap picnic table for the lower park. We were pleased to have won an Arbor Day Foundation landscaping volunteer, Ashfield's owner of Dostal Tree Service, who spent Arbor Day cutting, chipping and stacking 13 red pine trees around the tennis court parking lot. Additionally, we are most appreciative of David Lanoue for removing those logs for his wood boiler. We intend to remove the remaining pines as they have outlived their useful purpose.

We welcomed users of Buckland Recreation to our beach and facilities, as they rebuild their pool and bathhouse over the next couple of summers. Proceeds from their use fees to Ashfield have provided much needed funds for increased lifeguard services and special projects for the park.

Again, we are most grateful for the many volunteers who helped out at the Fall and Spring cleanups, exemplifying a village coming together for the benefit of the entire town. Special thanks go to Calvin Rankin, Kyle Taylor and Doug Cranson for their tree work and mowing services.

Our lifeguards this year were James Harrison, Kory Rankin, Guy Rice-Lesure and Rosalie Kinsey. Kory and Rosalie taught swim lessons to 39 children from the nine towns, thus restoring our long-standing service to the region. Pursuant to our participation with the update of our Open Space Plan, we are slowly making the bathhouse and picnic area more handicap accessible. We now have a baby changing table in the bathhouse and will install grab bars in the bathrooms and improve the driveway up to the picnic area for easier ambulance and handicap accessibility.

The upper park hosted another wedding last summer. Four boats left at the boat landing last fall will be auctioned off this Spring. Many folks enjoy the beauty and facilities of the lake and park, but unfortunately, the Commissioners have had their hands full dealing with multiple acts of vandalism. We do appreciate the many visitors who help to pick up trash, properly look after their dogs and keep our park clean and beautiful.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Haupt, Chair
Sally Rice

John Nawrocki

Personnel Board

Anyone who has ever been an employee knows that wages, expectations of the job/ position, and benefits are major concerns. This is true regardless of whether we're considering private business or municipal positions. The persons responsible for working with the Select Board to provide that guidance are the members of the Personnel Board. Ashfield has been fortunate to have a dedicated group of individuals who have been willing to shoulder that responsibility.

When this board submitted its draft employee policy to Town Counsel, it was returned with a request that it be reorganized according to a format that she approved. Some of us felt we'd been at this long enough, but we went back to the drawing board determined to rise to the challenge. We began by reorganizing our draft to fit the template provided. In the process, new policies were added and others altered to meet current statutes and working conditions. An example is provision of guidelines for the ever-changing electronic/telecommunication/social media environment. This comprehensive policy is designed to protect both the employees and the Town. We envision that the revamped Personnel Manual will be ready for Town Counsel's review in early 2018.

The Town is moving forward with development of a fair and equitable compensation program that attempts to reward employees based upon the level of skills along with experience required to perform the many jobs needed to keep the Town running smoothly. The Personnel Board has an important role in this process making sure job descriptions reflect actual expectations. As part of that process, it is important that wages and benefits meet market comparison of those positions.

A shortage of available members has been a challenge during this year. We actually held several work sessions to move the process along when quorum could not be met due to scheduling conflicts and a lack of active members. As the year draws to a close, we continue to be on the search to fill the open spots.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Phelps
Jennifer Markens
Melinda Gougeon
Tom Carter

Planning Board

The planning board advised many citizens with concerns and questions about land use in Ashfield. Issues discussed included telecommunication, senior housing, the pipeline, and short-term rentals.

We continue to work with the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee in an advisory role.

A number of property boundary changes were brought to us for ANR signatures.

One special permit was awarded for the purpose of creating office space.

The planning board recommended a senior housing bylaw to town meeting which was approved. It is intended that this bylaw will help our increasingly aging population avenues to affordable and convenient housing in Ashfield.

As the year finished the board was discussing the towns possible response to the legalization of marijuana as well as strategies to control large scale developments.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Fitzgerald, Chair

Alan Rice, Clerk

Ken Miller

Jim Cutler

Rick Chandler

Police Department

I am very pleased to present to you the 2017 Ashfield Police Department Annual Report. This report will reflect the outstanding service the Department has provided to the Ashfield Community.

It was an honor to be appointed Chief of Police earlier this year, and I intend to serve the community with utmost professionalism and integrity. The Ashfield Police Department is committed to a community based approach to policing. This requires strong relationships of mutual trust between the Department and the residents of Ashfield. Our department relies on the cooperation and support of the community, as they rely on us to protect and serve them.

Staffing

In 2017 the Ashfield Police Department was comprised of the Chief of Police, part-time Sergeant, seven (7) part-time officers, and three (3) auxiliary officers.



(Back row from left to right) Ofc. Jarek Konopko, Ofc. Gary Sibilia, Sgt. Daniel Thibault, Aux. Ofc. David Karbon, Ofc. Conan Pelc, Aux. Ofc. Phillip Snow, (Front row from left to right) Ofc. Gretchen Gerstner, Chief Beth Bezio, Ofc. Fred Bezio, Aux. Ofc. Kyle Walker.

Officer Mark Ruddock resigned for the Department on October 30, 2017 after receiving a full-time officer's position in the Town of Hatfield. Auxiliary Officer Phillip Snow also resigned from the Department in October 2017.

Also in October Officer Michael Gralenski and William Bissell were appointed to Officer positions by the Select Board. Both Gralenski and Bissell are long-term veterans of law enforcement each with over twenty years of experience.

Calls for Service

The Ashfield Police Department is very active in responding to calls for service. Calls for service are calls requiring police action; this does not include mere

directions or questions. Officers are required to respond to all fire and ambulance calls, to assist at these scenes with traffic control and rendering medical aid.

In 2017, the Shelburne Control Regional Dispatch Center received 645 calls for service. While the Ashfield Police Department received an estimated 279 calls and initiated an estimated 747 calls. Theses department initiated calls included area checks, house checks, cruiser maintenance, and administrative calls. Bringing the 2017 total to 1671.

The Ashfield Police Department is responsible for patrolling all areas of the Town of Ashfield. During patrols, officers look for unusual activity, keeping citizens safety in mind. During patrol, Officers perform law enforcement patrol activities such as, but not limited to, arresting violators of the law, checks of property and persons, security and house checks, investigating traffic crashes, enforcement of traffic offenses. Officers on duty also conduct criminal investigations.

The activity is documented in reports, logs, and calls for service. One departmental goal is to share information more effectively with the Community. This is accomplished with a monthly activity log in the Ashfield Daily Newspaper.

Events

During the Annual Fall Festival, Ashfield is a hub of activity. It is not uncommon



for this highly anticipated event to draw in hundreds, if not thousands, of people to town. It has been the pleasure of the Ashfield Police Department to maintain an active role during this event to insure the safety of all present. Our

participation in this event ranges from traffic control, cross walk safety to community policing, and everything in between.

Other events that occurred throughout the year included the Ashfield Film Festival, the Double Edge Spectacle, Farmers Market, Children's Market (at Ashfield Hardware), Memorial Day service, and the Halloween parade.



The Ashfield Police Department has taken an active role in caring for the safety and welfare of the participants. Another important goal of the Department is to become a positive community presence.

During the summers months, MASS DOT began the paving project of Route 112, from the Buckland Town Line to the Goshen Town Line. The project included grinding and removing a portion of the existing pavement, laying down new pavement, reflector setting,

and ending with line painting. Bicycle lanes were also added to the breakdown lane area of the roadway as well.

The Officers on this detail worked diligently to keep the traffic flow steady, while also keeping the workers of Palmer Paving safe.

Equipment

In April 2017 at a Special Town Meeting, our residents, voted to allocate money to fund a new cruiser replacing a thirteen (13) year old vehicle. Cruisers are the “mobile office” of the department, and are the most valuable piece of



equipment the department utilizes. The cruisers allow the department to respond with all the necessary tools that we may need from call to call. The standard equipment that is kept in the cruisers is crucial to an Officer's job, keeping the Town of Ashfield safe and secure.

The new 2017 Ford Police Interceptor Utility vehicle is all-wheel drive and provides a solid platform in all weather. This Utility vehicle is leaps and bounds above the sedan style cruisers, it was as if it was made for the our Hilltown.

The Ashfield Police Association, through generous donations, was also able to purchase two AED's that they donated to the police department. An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias of ventricular fibrillation and pulseless ventricular tachycardia, and is able to treat them through

defibrillation. The application of electricity stops the arrhythmia, which allows the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm. Every second counts with cardiac arrest, and defibrillation within three minutes can increase survival up to 70%.

Another form of equipment being utilized by the department is social media. This year the Department's Facebook page was updated and revised. The Facebook page is titled **Ashfield, MA Police Department**. This page allows the department to post information, happenings, and events that affect the Community.

Training

It has been incumbent on each community to make sure their officers receive forty (40) hours of in-service training every year. This required training includes: Firearms, legal updates, First Responder, CPR, AED, and Defensive Tactics. Also mandated in the forty (40) hours for 2017 are specialized classes revolving around procedural justice, critical incidents, and domestic violence.

In closing, I look forward to serving the Community, with professionalism and dedication. The Chief's door is always open, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

As always, the Ashfield Police Department is dedicated to serving the community, residents, and visitors of the Town of Ashfield.

Sincerely,

Bethann R. Bezio
Chief of Police



Senior Center

Staff of the Senior Center

Cathy Buntin, Director	40 hr/wk	Gloria Fisher, Office	8 hrs
Leanne Dowd, Outreach Coordinator	32 hrs	Bob Szafran, Transportation	Corrdinator and driver 25 hrs
Dot Lyman, Activities Coordinator	16 hrs	90 Volunteers sharing	2-20 hrs per week

It has been another busy year for the Senior Center. All three member towns continued to show an increase in use of services and programs. Ashfield increased usage both within Ashfield, at the Center in Shelburne Falls and with use of the FRTA Van Service. We have welcomed some new Ashfield residents who participated in programs and utilized support with an increasing number visiting regularly. 180 Ashfield individuals utilized programs and services 3,914 times. Thank you to the First Congregational Church and St. John's for hosting some of our activities and events. In addition, the Ashfield Council on Aging members have forged new partnerships and added opportunities for residents.

Transportation is available for medical appointments Monday through Friday to anywhere in Franklin County. Riders call the Center to request rides, reservations are taken and one of our van drivers picks up at the residents (60+years) at their home. Curb to curb service is offered. Small fees are charged per contract to defray costs of the service. FRTA provides three vans to meet these needs.

At the May 2017 town meetings all three town residents voted to support expansion of the Senior Center. A committee with four sub committees has been working diligently on finding a site, models for ownership, funding and design. The Senior Center Foundation, a nonprofit group dedicated to supporting the mission of the Senior Center has begun a Capital Fund and campaign to solicit donations for this effort. The three towns are working together to come up with the best possible solution to meet the needs for more space.

Sewer Commission

The treatment plant is currently in the process of permit renewal. The new permit will be issued by the Department of Environmental Protection and will allow continued operation for the next five years. This year the Ashfield Treatment Plant completed a required Facilities Report required for permit renewal as well as an Inflow and Infiltration Study required by 314 Code of Massachusetts Regulations:12.04 (2). Both studies were performed by DPC Engineering.

The Facilities Report looked at the performance of the plant and the infrastructure. The report concluded that:

- “As compared to other similarly sized groundwater disposal permit facilities we observed in the past, the Ashfield WWTP performs quite well relative to its permit requirements. This is particularly the case relative to effluent TSS and nitrogen concentrations.
- Based on our review of the operations data, the Ashfield WWTP is properly operated, maintained and in compliance with the requirements of its Groundwater Discharge Permit. This consistent high level of performance is attributed to both the robustness of the treatment processes, particularly the polishing effects of the sand filters and marsh systems, as well as the high level of operator attention.
- We do not believe that any major capital improvements are needed at this time, for the Ashfield WWTP to continue to meet the current permit requirements over the next five years. We do believe though, that the Town should begin to more aggressively budget for an increased amount of annual maintenance and replacement funds.”

The Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) study looked for ground water entering the system through defective joints and broken pipes, as well as water storm water entering from sump pumps, roof drains, cellar drains, and yard drains. The study found no significant I&I in the collection system beyond what is expected for new pipe. Recommendations were to repair the brick work under the manholes on Main Street and to address leakage issues in one additional manhole on Norton Hill. Hopefully with the current resurfacing of Route 116, the brick work issues will have been addressed by the time that this report is published. We hope that our users will continue to be vigilant to avoid inappropriate connections to the sewer that could trigger further engineering studies.

Looking forward, we expect that DEP will place greater emphasis on maintaining user rates and enterprise fund at a level which will make capital improvements feasible. The plant is now about 20 years old and repairs are more likely to be needed.

Finally, our assistant operator, Michele Novak, retired last September. We appreciate Michele's years of faithful, reliable work and hope that she is enjoying retirement, although she remains on the staff as an emergency operator. We had some difficulty finding a licensed operator to replace her, but currently the position has been split between Dick Taylor and Alan Nichols. We are grateful to all our staff for their willingness to work weekends and respond to middle of the night alarms.

Respectfully submitted,

The Ashfield Sewer Commission

Town Accountant

FY2017 General Fund Revenues Budget to Actual Summary

<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Taxes	4,096,116	4,121,501	25,385
Licenses and Permits	500	3,270	2,770
Intergovernmental	281,937	293,026	11,089
Charges for Services	60,000	62,326	2,326
Fees and Fines	11,250	14,281	3,031
Unclassified	2,000	12,353	10,353
Transfer from other funds	23,543	23,543	0
Total Revenues	\$4,477,346	\$4,534,975	\$57,629

FY2017 General Fund Revenues Expenditures to Actual Summary

<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
General Government	502,071	368,804	-133,267
Public Safety	294,610	230,231	-64,379
Public Works	814,309	693,318	-120,991
Community Services	171,161	136,852	-34,309
Education	2,635,951	2,579,647	-56,304
Insurance and Fringe Benefits	177,475	164,370	-13,105
Unclassified	55,522	55,103	-419
Debt Service	135,880	131,103	-4,777
Total Expenditures	\$4,786,979	\$4,359,428	-\$427,551

Ashfield Special Revenue Funds FY2017

30-Jun-17

<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>YTD Revenues</u>	<u>YTD Expenses</u>	<u>Balance</u>
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Highway Funds

218 MA Highway-C90 FY08	-356,304.20	645,554.17	-287,746.92	1,503.05
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Revolving Funds

231 Wetlands Protection Fund	4,164.35	0.00	0.00	4,164.35
232 Dog Revolving Fund	13,986.96	1,847.00	-4,621.47	11,212.49
235 Youth Comm Revolving Fund	571.50	0.00	-77.61	493.89
236 Library Fees Revolving Fund	2,914.45	1,820.00	-2,500	2,234.45
237 Swimming Program Rev Fund	232.45	2,500.00	-769.88	1,962.57
238 Lake Dock Donations	11,082.75	8,237.71	-16,771.55	2,548.91

Other Special Revenue Funds

255 Opp Against Pipeline	1,271.00	0.00	0.00	1,271.00
256 Town History Book Sales	2,153.04	80.00	0.00	2,233.04
258 Recycling Grant	500.00	500.00	0.00	1,000
261 Food Inspection Grant	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00
262 Employee Wellness Grant	557.36	0.00	-214.00	343.36
263 Tree Donations	1,494.87	0.00	0.00	1,494.87
264 Flu Clinic Donations	1,429.00	0.00	0.00	1,429.00
265 Sanderson Barn-Ins Donation	100.00	100.00	0.00	200.00
269 Con Comm Clerk Donations	77.87	0.00	0.00	77.87
271 Human Relations	12.87	0.00	0.00	12.87
272 Record Preservation	1,571.48	0.00	-1,571.48	0.00
273 Police Donations Fund	803.54	11.37	-39.10	775.81
274 O'Donnell Donations	101.34	0.00	0.00	101.34
275 Steeple Donations	2,686.82	0.00	0.00	2,686.82
276 TH Preservation & Renovation	14,936.18	345.00	0.00	15,281.18
277 Ambulance Donations	995.24	0.00	0.00	995.24
279 Grant Program Income	14,392.80	0.00	-14,392.80	0.00
280 Cultural Council Donations	681.22	0.00	-74.22	607
281 Septic Repair Program	75,034.27	12.73	0.00	75,047
282 Belding Endowment-Library	3,126.49	0.00	0.00	3,126.49
283 Library Investment Earnings	6,455.68	7,556.50	-7,050.05	6,962.13
284 J Donald Art Fund	483.97	0.00	0.00	483.97
285 Belding Endowment-Park	1,087.70	0.00	0.00	1,087.70
287 Green Energy Grant	32,783.98	5,800	-755.20	37,828.78
288 Solarize Mass	315.72	0.00	-1,971.89	315.72
289 K-9 Support Fund	58.87	0.00	0.00	58.87
291 Library Donations, Fundraising	17,113.68	13,453.65	-6,005.19	24,562.14
292 Town History Fund	0.00	80.00	0.00	80.00
294 T H Floor Preservation Fund	4,401.54	0.00	0.00	4,401.54
295 Insurance Proceeds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
296 Historic Commission Donations	300.70	0.00	0.00	300.70
298 WMRLS Grant	689.52	0.00	0.00	689.52
301 Town Hall Employee Fund	122.76	200.00	-47.50	322.76

State & Federal Grants

410 FEMA Snow Emergency Funds	363.54	0.00	-363.54	0.00
411 FEMA Storm Emergency Funds	4,517.97	0.00	-4,517.97	0.00
412 Council on Aging Grant	3,761.50	7,220.00	-4,925.00	6,056.50
414 Library State Aid	0.00	2,818.16	-2,818.16	0.00
415 Cultural Council	4,003.37	4,400.00	-4,457.76	3,945.61
419 Failed Septic System Grant	10,064.08	0.00	0.00	10,064.08
420 Fire Dept SAFE Grant	613.27	3,063.00	-2,830.70	845.57
421 Volunteer Firefighters Grant	389.26	0.00	0.00	389.26
423 EDS Grant	670.99	0.00	0.00	670.99
425 Agricultural Innovation Gr	566.95	0.00	0.00	566.95
427 Forest Fire Grant	485.85	0.00	0.00	485.85
429 Small Scale Recycling Grant	2,291.96	1,800.00	0.00	4,091.96
430 Broadband Grant	0.00	0.00	-4,537.50	-4,537.50
431 Wastesite Cleanup Grant	0.00	15,000	-6,001.50	8,998.50
432 Early Voting Grant	0.00	250.00	-118.86	131.14
433 EMPG Grant	0.00	7,367.90	-2,402.88	4,965.02
434 Last Mile Broadband	0.00	640,000	0.00	640,000
435 Mass Tech Collab Grant	0.00	656.25	0.00	656.25

Enterprise Fund

610 WWTP Fund	100,082.95	164,825.69	-133,450.91	132,876.36
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Capital Projects

710 Capital Project-Highway Garage	1,640.43	0.00	0.00	1,640.43
715 Capital Project - Highway Grader	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
716 Capital Project - Library	19,548.73	27,446.00	-24,673.83	22,320.90
717 Capital Project – Backhoe	0.00	34,200.00	-33,675.00	525.00

Trust Funds

811 Mary Priscilla Howes Fund	12,095.88	108.41	0.00	12,204.29
812 William Hathaway Fund	36,879.07	83.92	0.00	36,962.99
813 Susan Howes Fund	8,112.84	16.22	0.00	8,129.06
814 Major King Fund	18,988.59	37.96	0.00	19,026.55
815 Eliza Miller Fund	36,297.31	72.57	0.00	36,369.88
816 Whiting Street Fund	9,099.69	18.19	0.00	9,117.88
817 Henry Taylor Fund	20,134.93	40.25	0.00	20,175.18

818 Salmon Miller Fund	38,384.40	76.74	0.00	38,461.14
819 Fred Cross General Fund	38,125.64	96.22	-5,000.00	33,221.86
820 Other Cemetery Fund	1,250.00	0.00	0.00	1,250.00
821 Mabelle Jordan Fund	42.89	0.09	0.00	42.98
822 Fred Cross Library Fund	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
823 Fred Cross Cemetery Fund	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
824 Belding Endowment-Park/Library	20,522.38	0.00	0.00	20,522.38
825 Mary Morrill Elwell Sands Fund	5,081.24	10.16	0.00	5,091.40
830 Stabilization Fund	489,780.19	979.20	0.00	490,759.39
831 Capital Stabilization	2,004.47	2,008.97	0.00	4,013.44

Agency Funds

889 Custodian Fees	11.04	0.00	0.00	11.04
890 Retirees Health Ins	0.00	11,826.00	-12,413.24	-587-24
891 Off Duty Police Detail	-23.00	9,869.70	-19,048.50	-9,201.80
892 Firearm ID Cards	5,197.50	3,705.00	-4,075.00	4,827.50
894 Fire Dept Fees	468.00	675.00	-1,050.00	93.00
896 Collector's Demands	6,126.00	5,027.00	0.00	11,153.00
897 Collector's MLCs	259.00	0.00	0.00	259.00
898 Deputy Collector's Fees	2,019.00	2,901.00	-3,337.00	1,583.00
899 Water District Fees	34,493.65	42,409.24	-69,660.87	7,242.02

Town Clerk

Staff

During 2017 the Department was staffed by Town Clerk Bridget Rodrigue and Assistant Town Clerk Lynn Hay.

Vitals

Recorded Vital Statistics			
1917 & 2017			
Year	Births	Deaths	Marriages
1917	24	18	8
2017	14	9	4
1917 Town Clerk – Allison G. Howes			
2017 Town Clerk – Bridget Rodrigue			

Licenses

We had another good year for dog licenses, with 395 licenses issued during the year.

Voter Registration

The Town Clerk's Office continued to utilize the State Voter Registration Information System for voter registration. This system connects Ashfield with Town Clerk offices across the state to avoid duplication of registrations, and allows residents to register to vote or change their address or party affiliation at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. This system also supports online voter registration.

Census

The Town Clerk's office printed and prepared the census forms in-house, as has been done in years past. These forms were then distributed to residents for updating. The 2017 population per the Town Census was 1,723.

Town Profile			
Population As of January 1, 2018		Political Party Affiliation As of December 31, 2017	
Population by Age Group		Recognized Parties in MA	
Under 20 years	276	Democrat	415
	168	Republican	80
20-29 years	163	Green- Rainbow	5
30-39 years	186	United Independent	8
40-49 years	274	Unenrolled	810
50-59 years	376	Political Designations	
60-69 years	280	Libertarian	4
70 years and over	1723	Total	1322

Town Election

The Annual Town Election was held on Saturday, May 6, 2017. There were only 161 ballots cast, for a turnout of only 11.88%. The results can be found below.

Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting was also held on Saturday, May 6, 2017 and featured 32 Warrant Articles. There were also two Special Town Meetings held during 2017. The April 18, 2017 meeting featured ten Warrant Articles, while the December 11, 2017 meeting featured only two Warrant Articles.

Note: An excerpted copy of the proceedings for Town Meetings are included elsewhere in this report.

Town of Ashfield
Annual Town Election – May 6, 2017
 Registered voters 1355
 Ballots Cast 161
 % Turnout 11.88%

Position	Name	Total # of Votes
Moderator	Stewart Eisenberg	144
	Blank	17
Tree Warden	Thomas Poissant	140
	Blank	21
Select Board	Todd Olanyk	141
	Blank	19
	Write-Ins	1
Board of Assessors	Donna Sarro	137
	Blank	31
	Write-Ins	2
Finance Committee (1)	Mary Fitz-Gibbon	137
	Blank	24
Finance Committee	Carol Lebold	130
	Blank	31
Finance Committee	Carl Satterfield	76
	Kyle Taylor	69
	Blank	16
Board of Health	Duncan Colter	136
	Blank	25
Constable	John LaBelle	144
	Blank	17

Park Commission	John Nawrocki	144
	Blank	17
Sewer Commission	Tom Miner, Jr.	142
	Blank	19
Planning Board	Norman Russell	39
	Richard Chandler	110
	Blank	12
Library Trustee	Marcine Eisenberg	139
	Blank	22
Ballot Question # 1	Yes	88
Highway Pickup	No	42
	Blank	31
Ballot Question # 2	Yes	125
Landfill Closure	No	24
	Blank	12

Election Workers

Constables

John LaBelle, Betty Lesure, and Warren Kirkpatrick

Wardens

Nancy Garvin, Lynn Taylor, Sally Yates, and Anne Yuryan

Precinct Clerk

Duncan Colter

Election Workers

Honey Boyden, Irene Branson, Jean Cherdack, Doug Cranson, Poppy Doyle, Wayne Farrell, Diane Field, George Stephan, Kyle Taylor, Lynn Hay, Beverly Williams, and Sally Yates.

Tally Sheet Counters

Laura Bessette, Buz Eisenberg, Marcine Eisenberg, Mary Fitz-Gibbon, Nancy Hoff, Sandy Lilly, Phil Lussier, Kyle Taylor, Lynn Taylor, Betty Stewart, Virginia Wiswell, and Faye Whitney.

Hand Count Votes at ATM and STM

Nina Coler, Marcine Eisenberg, Sandy Lilly, Caroline Murray, Priscilla Phelps, Betty Stewart, and Faye Whitney.

A special thank you to all our Election Workers who served our community during the 2017 local election and town meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bridget S. Rodrigue".

Bridget S. Rodrigue
Town Clerk

Town Collector

The following table shows balances owed as of June 30th, 2017:

	Real Estate	Personal Property	Motor Vehicle
2017	\$109,722.36	\$1,911.50	\$10,211.48
2016	\$38,877.52	\$2,733.38	\$2,194.07
2015	\$7,321.61	\$1,812.84	\$1,940.32
2014	\$3,098.19	\$2,146.70	\$1,123.91
Prior to 2014	\$4,477.99	\$3,414.24	\$0.00
Total	\$163,497.67	\$12,018.66	\$15,469.78

Overall Total Owed: \$190,986.11

All payments are due on a quarterly system, with due dates as follows:

1st Quarter – August 1st

2nd Quarter – November 1st

3rd Quarter – February 1st

4th Quarter – May 1st

To keep postage to a minimum, only two mailings are done with two quarters in each mailing.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Hay, Town Collector

Town Hall Building Committee

The Town Hall Building Committee was appointed by the Select Board in March 2010. The committee's charge is to make recommendations and propose solutions relating to the preservation of Town Hall, and to ensure its efficient, but respectful, use by Town employees, volunteers, and citizens.

Committee members volunteered many hours of their time to this charge, working with the Select Board, the Green Communities Committee, the Highway Department, and the Town Hall staff. In 2017, the Town Hall Building Committee was actively involved with the following projects:

- Mold abatement in the police station, restrooms, and crawl spaces;
- Removal of unneeded or unused items stored in two closets and under the stairs;
- Monitoring humidity levels;
- Purchase, installation and maintenance of dehumidifiers and air conditioners;
- Repairing the vapor barrier in the large crawl space and adding one to the small crawl space;
- Replacing the back door with an energy efficient one;
- Installation of new hardware on the front doors, as required by the fire code;
- Repair of the leaking slate roof with 210 new slates by Mahan Slate Roofing Co. of Springfield;
- Replacing the stones in the exterior landings of the south fire exits, as required by the building inspector;
- Working with the highway department to replace a moisture barrier on the east side of the building, to ensure more frequent trash removal, and to remove a tripping hazard on the front walk;
- Replacing broken window panes;
- Consultations with Andrea Woods of FRCOG, and providing drawings, to advertise for architect bids for steeple repair;
- Working with a volunteer to take photos of the steeple with his drone;
- Interviewing architects from three firms and recommending Stevens and Associates of Brattleboro, Vermont to the Select Board;
- Meeting with members of this firm and surveying the steeple with them in their lift;

- Working with Mark Day to replace the rusting metal radiator covers with stainless steel covers in the police station and restrooms;
- Repair of the historic wooden seats in the upper hall;
- Working with applicants using the Town Hall and checking to be sure it is secure.

It should be noted that much of the labor to accomplish these tasks was donated by members of this Committee and other volunteers, resulting in very large monetary savings to the Town.

At the Annual Town Meeting in May, voters agreed to the Town Hall Building Committee's annual budget request of \$10,000, and to the request for an additional \$25,000 to add to the existing steeple fund of \$60,000. Town Meeting also saw the creation of a new fund, the Town Hall Repair and Maintenance Fund. These two funds are now combined for a total of \$85,000. However, the steeple repair may require an additional \$100,000 or more.

In 2018, the Town Hall Building Committee will continue to work on the following:

- steeple repair,
- repair and/or acquisition of historic wooden seats;
- purchase of new rugs for the lower entry and lower hall;
- repair of historic windows and purchase of storm windows;
- purchase and installation of stair treads;
- replacement of radiator covers;
- insulation of the two outer walls in the men's room;
- painting the rest rooms;
- updating the Town Hall use application;
- repairing the wooden ramp on the west side of the building;
- upkeep of Town offices.

The Town Hall Building Committee is also requesting a capitol fund of \$6,000 per year for five years to purchase 40 storm windows, and \$5,800 per year for twelve years to repair the 48 historic windows.

Members of the Town Hall Building Committee:

Stuart Harris, Chair
Doug Cranson
Mary Quigley

Kyle Taylor, Town Hall Steward
Donna Scott, Custodian
Nancy Gray Garvin, Secretary

Town Treasurer

Reconciliation of Treasurer's Cash

Balance of Cash as of July 1, 2016	\$1,543,292.56
Cash Receipts:	\$6,538,210.84
Cash Disbursements:	\$5,246,667.90
Balance of Cash as of June 30, 2017	<u>\$2,834,835.50</u>

	General Funds	Special Revenues	Trust Funds
Financial Institutions			
People's United Bank			
Payroll Account	\$24,858.63		
General Fund-CD	\$1,958.63		
Fred Cross Library Trust Fund			\$5,000.00
Fred Cross Cemetery Trust Fund			\$2,000.00
William Hathaway Fund			\$36,962.99
Susan Howes Fund			\$8,129.06
Major King Fund			\$19,026.55
Eliza Miller Fund			\$36,369.88
Salmon Miller Fund			\$38,461.14
Whiting Street Fund			\$9,117.88
Henry Taylor Fund			\$20,175.18
Septic Repair Program Account		\$51,204.16	
Stabilization Fund			\$490,759.39
Cemetery Trust Funds			\$1,250.00
Mabelle Jordon Trust Fund			\$42.89
Mary Morrill Elwell Sands Memorial Trust			\$5,091.40
Fred Cross Trust Fund			\$33,221.86
Easthampton Savings Bank			
Vendor Account	\$26,628.23		
OPEB Trust Fund			\$6,013.44
Library Donation Account		\$115.65	
M. M. D. T.			
General Fund	\$340,498.77		
Mary Priscilla Howes Trust Fund			\$12,204.29
Adams Community Bank			
General Fund	\$252,617.41		

Financial Institutions	General Funds	Special Revenues	Trust Funds
Bank of America			
Belding Endowment – Library		\$24,147.69	
UniBank			
Last Mile Broadband Grant		\$640,000	
General Fund	\$523,657.40		
General Fund Online Banking	\$216,156.06		
General Fund Online Banking	\$9,166.83		
Total: \$2,834.835.50	\$1,395,541.96	\$715,467.50	\$723,826.04

Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District

We ended the year by being named "Veterans' Services District of the Year" by the state. Our district has now been in operation for 2 ½ years. We are the largest district by community count and square miles covered in the state. Below are just some of the programs and services we help veterans' and their dependents with:

- M.G.L. Ch 115 benefit – Needs based program of financial and medical assistance to eligible veterans and their dependents
- Assistance to veterans and dependents to help file for health care, pensions, and service-connected disabilities
- Homeless prevention assistance to veterans and their families
- Employment help with job searches, resumes, and job interview skills
- Burial assistance to include government markers, flag holders, internment, and VA burial reimbursement
- Veterans records retrieval and storage
- Referral to other public and private agencies to include housing, fuel assistance, employment, training, education
- Attend area outreach events(fairs, festivals, health care expos)

We have continued to work hard helping veterans and dependents file for VA benefits due them. Our awarded claims have outpaced CY16 bringing in close to \$423,000.00 in new claim money for our clients. Overall the district has over \$1,923,000.00 in VA awards flowing into our towns on a monthly basis.

We forecast the Ch115 caseload to remain flat for the foreseeable future for our towns. Although reimbursed back to the towns at 75%, this takes over a year to get back from the state, so reducing payouts up front has freed up funds for the member towns.

For the coming year we will continue to assist veterans, and will emphasize programs for the dependents of veterans, particularly the elderly population. Our major projects for the future involve veterans' gravesites locations and conditions, and training 1st responders on veterans' issues and resources.

Timothy Niejadlik, Director

Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Services District

Zoning Board of Appeals

The Ashfield Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) operates in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 40A, and Ashfield's Zoning Bylaws, hearing and deciding various appeals, applications for special permits, petitions for variances, and appeals from decisions of the Building Commissioner. The ZBA also hears and decides on Chapter 40B, which relates to affordable housing.

The ZBA received two applications in 2017; both were eventually withdrawn.

Case 2017-1: Peter Wiitanen filed a petition for a special permit or variance to create two non-conforming lots from one lawfully non-conforming lot. The 1591 Conway Road property has two homes, both built in the 1800s, and Mr. Wiitanen wanted to create separate lots so one could be sold. The Planning Board determined that the creation of two lots complied with the zoning requirements for the purpose of subdivision (200-foot frontage; two-acre minimum lot size), and endorsed the plan as Approval Not Required (ANR). The issue before ZBA was whether the new lots, on which both homes were within the front yard setback but legally non-conforming to the zoning bylaw, would create additional setback encroachments. The proposed property line ran between a shed and a garage, neither of which was grandfathered. The line would have placed both structures within the required 25-foot side yard setback. Without a formal determination, the ZBA suggested that were the shed moved and the property line adjusted to be 25 feet from the garage, then no special permit or variance would likely be required. Before the Board could make a final determination, Mr. Wiitanen withdrew his application without prejudice.

The second petition, filed by Jim Cutler, appealed the Building Commissioner's decision that the occasional rental of his property at 421 Beldingville Road would require a Special Permit from the Planning Board as a lodging house business. Under the Building Code, this use would require installing a sprinkler system throughout the house. Rather than continue with the appeal to the ZBA, Mr. Cutler withdrew the application.

Several ZBA members attended the annual conference hosted by the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative, and found the workshops very informative.

Respectfully submitted,

Mollie Babize, Chair

Katharine Nysten

Anne Yuryan

Susan Stark, Associate

Faye Whitney, Associate